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ABSTRACT

This document traces the personal growth of teachers through the research literature and interviews and conversations with more than 40 elementary and secondary teachers. Chapter One provides an overview of teachers as artists, suggesting that teaching is a highly refined skill that requires knowledge and practice to master. Chapters Two and Three deal with the personal elements for change and growth in teaching, identifying recurrent themes drawn from interviews with teachers and synthesizing these themes with the research literature. Chapters Four and Five describe the organizational environment that promotes growth, drawing upon the growing body of literature about institutional cultures in industry and schools. The focus is on how a school's culture or climate can enhance teachers' personal and professional growth. In Chapter Five, teachers describe their views of change processes in their individual buildings. Chapter Six highlights the major themes and considers the implication of teachers' personal growth states for school improvement and artistic teaching. The final chapter presents several fictive descriptions of schools, depicting what some alternatives might be. In addition, there are nine "reflections," one or more at the end of each chapter, that call upon the reader to do critical-inquiry exercises about the nature of learning and teaching, including several instruments for measuring personal and career satisfaction. (JD)

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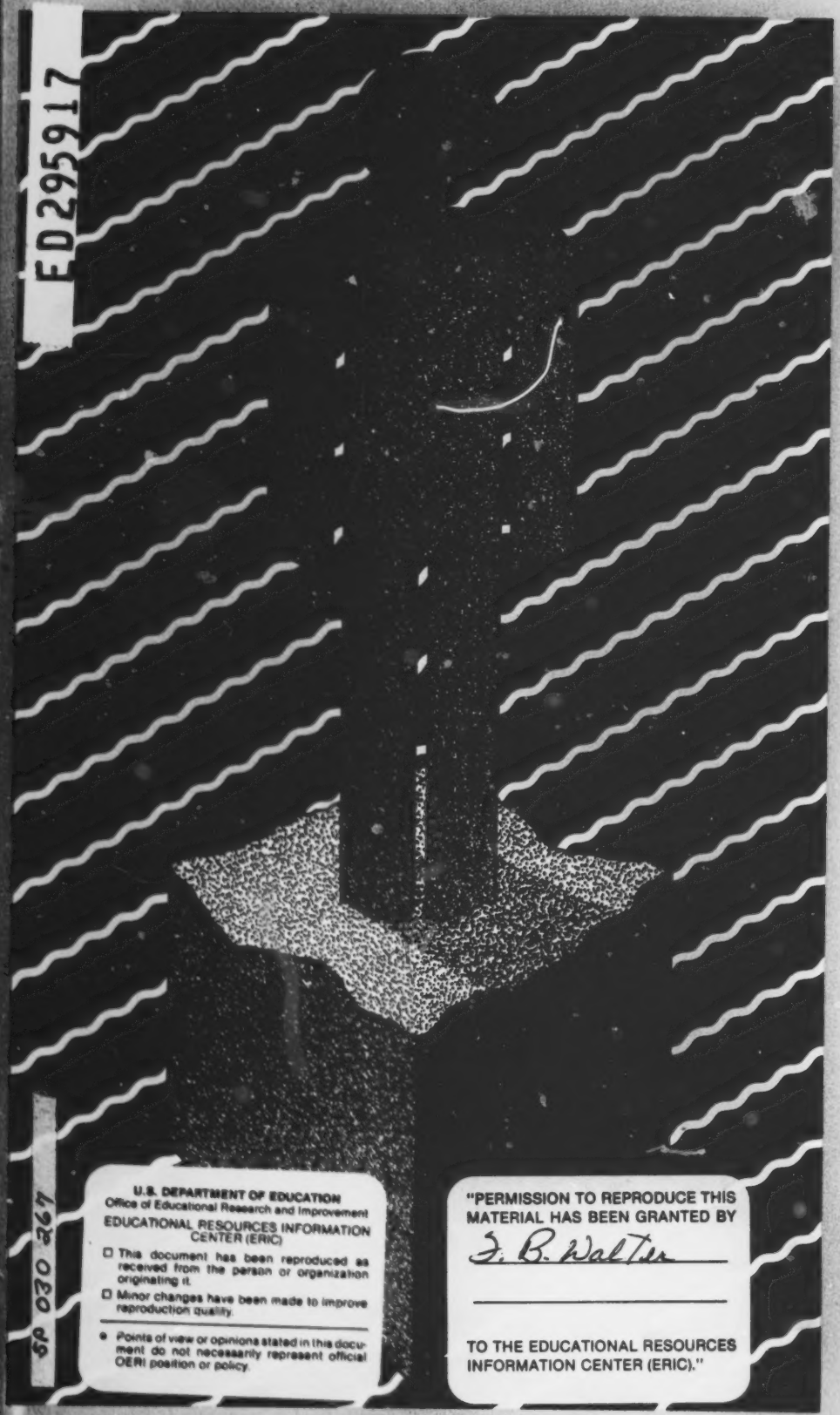

TEACHING AS LEARNING:

THE PERSONAL DIMENSIONS OF TEACHER GROWTH

SP 030 267

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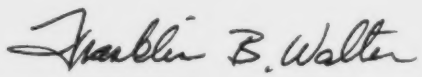
Foreword

America is rapidly becoming a society of lifelong learners. Learning is an ongoing process that does not stop when one finishes high school or college. Learning is a lifetime endeavor because people continue to grow throughout their lives. As we move into the twenty-first century, we shall become even more aware that America is an information society, where many jobs will be involved in some fashion with the processing of data. The service of information will become increasingly important. The individual, in this sophisticated world, will need to keep current and be involved at the workplace as well as in the community.

Teachers, perhaps more than most professionals, must be fully informed about their discipline. Keeping current is, indeed, the mark of an artistic teacher. We all know such teachers, either in our personal acquaintance or through our children. This publication is addressed to the artist-teachers, those individuals who are committed to excellence in education. This publication identifies these teachers, explores their workday world in school, and demonstrates, through interviews and anecdotes, the commitment these teachers have to students. This document provides fine resource material for all educators who are interested in personal change and growth.



Franklin B. Walter
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

Acknowledgments

This publication began in the summer of 1983 when 16 teachers involved in a self-directed school improvement project agreed to be interviewed. Subsequently, interviews were conducted with teachers in local schools, large cities, and through contacts with regional council members.

In addition, forums were held with 13 experienced teachers and 8 first-year teachers. Two all-day meetings were held with the experienced teachers. Each of the experienced teachers had taught at least four years and averaged 38 years in age. All except one of the beginning teachers were in their early 20's.

Forty-two teachers were involved in this project. Three principals were also interviewed.

With deep appreciation, this publication is dedicated to these educators who were so helpful and open. Without their assistance, this project could not have been possible. Their distinct voices and styles give life to this publication.

One other group of educators needs to be recognized: Members of the State Inservice Advisory Committee critiqued this publication and provided insightful comments and suggestions. Their reviews are genuinely appreciated.

Finally, thanks are extended to the Columbus City School District for permission to use the district's photographs throughout this publication.

Introduction

This publication complements *Staff Development Leadership: A Resource Book* and *Staff Development Leadership: A Training Manual.* The *Resource Book* synthesizes research, theory, and practice about effective inservice education. The *Training Manual,* in contrast, provides a step-by-step formulation for training a building-level team of teachers in ways to improve their school. This document traces the personal growth of teachers through the research literature and through interviews and conversations with more than 40 elementary and secondary teachers. The intent is to examine how excellent teachers—those who are artists of their profession—continue to learn and grow as teachers. What are the characteristics of artistic teachers? What is teaching like for them? How can the process of growth be reinforced by the school's culture? What are the dynamics of change? How do varying career levels differ in their implications for adult learners? Those are some of the questions addressed.

Though the structure of the publication is designed to reinforce the content, each chapter is self-contained; it can be read singly if one is interested in a particular topic. The chapters intersperse research with interviews and voices which are intended to evoke, in capsules, the discussion.

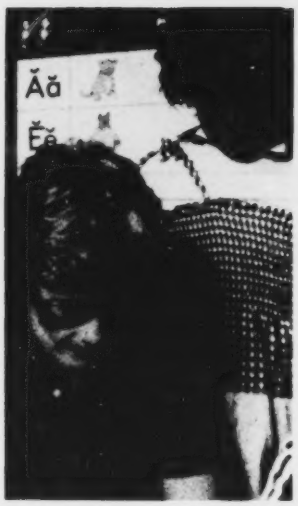
Chapter One provides an overview of teachers as artists, suggesting that teaching is a highly refined skill that requires knowledge and practice to master. Chapters Two and Three deal with the personal elements of change and growth in teaching, identifying recurrent themes drawn from interviews with teachers and synthesizing these themes with the research literature. Chapters Four and Five describe the organizational environment that promotes growth, drawing upon the growing body of literature about institutional cultures in industry and schools. The focus is on how a school's culture or climate can enhance teachers' personal and professional growth. In Chapter Five, for example, teachers describe their views of change processes in their individual buildings. Chapter Six highlights the major themes and considers implications of teachers' personal growth states for school improvement and artistic teaching.

The final chapter, "Four Scenes from the Future," presents several fictive descriptions of schools, depicting what some alternatives might be. In addition, there are nine reflections that call upon the reader to do critical-inquiry exercises about the nature of learning and teaching, including several instruments for measuring personal and career satisfaction.

It is hoped that the publication will raise questions about teaching—its nature, its scope, its importance in American life. These questions involve issues of career growth and status, types of teaching responsibilities, and how schools themselves might be changed or improved. This book does not attempt to provide facile answers. Its purpose is to identify issues that need to be critically reexamined and discussed.

Chapter One:

The Artistry of Teaching



Recent national interest in education has produced a spate of reports on schools and teachers. Good teachers are essential. But given the sense of crisis about American education and the failure of schools, one could justifiably wonder if there are any good teachers left. How typical is the teacher who fails a basic skills test? How representative are the horror stories about ineffectual teachers that gain media attention? The answer is, they are not typical. Newsworthy, yes; typical, no.

In the midst of the cries for reform, the movement to increase standards, and the efforts to improve teacher training and schools, little attention has been paid to one important fact: For each teacher who is ill prepared, there are many teachers who know the subject matter and how to teach it. For each teacher who cannot pass a standardized test in subject matter, there are many who can. And for each teacher who is lethargic and relies on ditto materials to keep the kids busy, there are dozens of teachers who individualize their teaching and create varied learning activities to meet students' needs.

"I like my kids to make connections. To see how things fit together. I guess that's what I find the most fun. You can see it in a kid's eyes. She's been working with the formula. She's discouraged. Ready to give up. That's the scary part—letting them go far enough to make the connections without getting turned off. Then, it's there. She's got it. You can see it in the eyes. I love to watch their eyes. They really are the windows to the soul. Eureka!! That's the way discoveries are always described in the cartoons. The guy, you know, sitting in the bathtub suddenly has the insight. Eureka. I know why I became a teacher when I see my kids doing eurekas. It's a sight to see, believe me. It's unforgettable."

Frances K.
Mathematics Teacher

The problem basically, when one looks at schools or teachers, parallels the classic question of whether the glass is half filled with water or half empty. The national reports and popular media looked for flaws in education. They found them. But for the most part they ignored the successes—the teachers who are doing a fine job, the students who are learning, the skillful administrators who encourage schools where teaching and learning are nurtured. Critics have largely ignored the successes while looking for the failures. What has been missing, in short, is a matter of perspective.

A Historical Perspective

Teachers stand at the center of learning. Their influence upon students is immense. Teaching is an awesome responsibility that directly affects students in myriad ways. Yet it can be fairly said, as many of the national reports have noted, that teachers are underpaid, underappreciated, and overworked (Education Commission of the States [ECS], 1983, pp. 5-6). The physical conditions of teaching—class size, facilities, teaching materials, and resources—are so overwhelming and so discouraging that many teachers who could make a difference with students decide to leave teaching. Those who leave are often gifted teachers (Ryan, 1970; Howey and Bents, 1979; Feistritzer, 1983).

Traditionally, America has given lip service to education; education was a means for achievement and success. Yet America has undervalued teachers. Remuneration for teaching has traditionally been the lowest among the professions, and the esteem of teachers, especially in contrast with European nations, has not been high (Lortie, 1975).

The demands upon teachers have always been great. Lawrence Cremin, for example, notes that in the latter part of the nineteenth century teachers were expected to perform at extraordinary levels:

> From the beginning, progressivism cast the teacher in an almost impossible role: he was to be an artist of consummate skill, properly knowledgeable in his field, meticulously trained in the science of pedagogy, and thoroughly imbued with a burning zeal for social improvement (Cremin, 1961, p. 168).

Then—in the 1890's—as now, there was a tremendous gap between the rhetoric about good teaching and the actual teaching conditions. The schools received little financial support. As Cremin (1961) states, "the gap between real and ideal was appalling" (p. 168).

Because teachers are so crucial to classroom life and yet so undervalued, they are easy targets. It is easy, albeit simplistic, to blame teachers for school failures. And, as is so often the case, the more sensational the charge, the more attention it gets. This statement by Joseph Mayer Rice is typical:

> The office of teacher in the average American school is perhaps the only one in the world that can be retained indefinitely in spite of the grossest negligence and incompetency (Quoted in Cremin, 1961, p. 169).

This diatribe echoes many of the complaints about teachers and teaching today. Yet Rice made the statement in 1893.

Seldom has a profession had higher expectations by the public yet so little support. Nearly everyone believes he or she could be a good teacher. After all, many people have spent 12 years of their life in public schools. Teaching is teaching. What's so hard about it? Besides, teachers get the summers off. This naive view of teaching and learning reflects a common misperception of what good teaching requires. It is one thing to be a student in public schools for 12 years. It is another thing to take responsibility for helping between 150 and 170 students per day to learn a complex subject like English or mathematics. Yet this is what many secondary teachers are required to do. Similarly, to teach 25 elementary students the core of subjects that will encourage a love of learning and make them lifelong learners is not easy. Theodore Sizer captures the difficulty of being a good teacher in his contrast between teaching and learning:

> Curiously most of us, lay people and educators alike, tend to underrate teaching. We rarely underestimate the difficulties of learning. Having had to learn, we know that it is a complicated and unpredictable business. Likewise, the craft of provoking us to learn—the act of teaching—is itself complicated. . . .
>
> And yet Americans underrate the craft of teaching. We treat it mechanistically. . . . Education, apparently, is something someone does to somebody else. . . . We thus underrate the mystery, challenge, and complexity of learning and, as a result, operate schools that are extraordinarily wasteful.

> Not surprisingly, we also underrate teachers. We say, "Those who can, do; those who can't, teach" (Sizer, 1984, pp. 2-3).*

Teaching is doing. Doing teaching well requires skill, practice, persistence, and insights required of few other professions.

Great Teaching

What distinguishes the artistic master teacher from the average teacher? Probably the same qualities that separate the outstanding doctor from the mediocre one, or the excellent lawyer from the shyster. Those qualities that distinguish excellence from mediocrity are embodied in one word—*professionalism*. Fine teachers are educational leaders who, like top professionals in any field, are concerned with developing and refining their skills. Such teachers, the popular media notwithstanding, are concerned each day with doing the best job they can, striving in spite of conditions that may encourage mediocrity or discouragement. Such teachers strive to excel. They acknowledge their professional responsibility to their schools and to their students.

"I guess what's changed my teaching the most is looking at the process. I try to take the kids on a learning adventure. It's like a marathon run. Some kids go fast. Some slow. Some won't finish the race. But I want them to know they can learn. The learning can be fun. It's like that Indian proverb, 'Even the longest journey begins with the first step.' I want those kids to savor each step. Not for a grade. Not for me. For them. Because each step helps them experience the journey of learning, I want them to see the paths. Then they'll create their own maps."

Douglas R.
Science Teacher

Unable to find solace in criticizing others, outstanding teachers recognize their fundamental obligation—to teach each student as effectively as possible. And no matter how many times they fail, or how many times they become discouraged and want to give up, they persevere. This tenacity, the willingness to strive for excellence and not give up, is the hallmark of the master teacher. Putting aside personal feelings of self-worth and inadequacy, these teachers are self-renewing and are able to focus on helping students make connections.

Philip Jackson (1968) reports that elementary school teachers participate in "1000 interpersonal interchanges each day" (p. 11). These actions and decisions affect children constantly throughout the day. Some of these decisions, perforce, will be wrong. Some will show bad judgment. Yet excellent teachers, recognizing their own fallibility, will try to learn from the mistakes, to reflect upon the decisions, especially the inappropriate ones, and to learn from them. The constant refusal to become discouraged and the conviction to learn from mistakes contribute to the excellent teacher's growth.

Teaching, above all, is an interpersonal activity that does not follow an easy formula or recipe. Teachers, like their students, grow and learn from their errors. They are willing to confront themselves and to examine their practices closely so that successes are encouraged and failure lessened. Confrontations with the self, made with the willingness to acknowledge mistakes, are never easy. Yet they are essential for change (Jersild, 1955).

*From *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School* by Theodore R. Sizer, pp. 2-3. Copyright © 1984 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.

To engage in self-examination requires practice. To profit from the discoveries requires acceptance of one's errors and a willingness to work on changing those behaviors that are interfering with students' learning. Awareness of the problem and the willingness to change, however, are not sufficient. The teacher needs time to practice and refine the new behavior. Mastery of teaching skills does not come easy, nor do the changes occur rapidly. Fine teachers recognize that learning to be an excellent teacher is a lifetime endeavor with disappointments and setbacks along the way. Yet such teachers persevere because they believe in the importance of teaching students. A willingness to grow and to learn is essential. So is a willingness to fail.

The Teacher As Artist

Daily, teachers must confront the disparity between what they aspire to do with the students and what they can accomplish. This disparity between intent and action is inherent in any creative process, especially teaching, which involves so many simultaneous interactions with so many people. Narrowing this gap between the ideal and the real can be a career endeavor, a goal that by its very nature can never be fully realized.

The discrepancy between the teaching ideal and the classroom reality parallels the nature of artistic experience—the contradiction between the artist's conception and the actual piece of art. "This fundamental contradiction, arising from the hopeless discrepancy between conception and realization, is at the root of all artistic creation, and it helps explain the anguish which seems to be an unavoidable component of that experience" (May, 1975, p. 83).

Like an artist, the teacher must strive in each class, and for every student, to present a fresh, innovative experience. Students know when the teacher is doing the lesson by rote. Thus, great teachers must try to help the students experience the material with the teacher as if for the first time. The ability to bring vitality and creativity as one teaches material repeatedly is the mark of a gifted teacher—a teacher who can embrace the teaching act wholeheartedly. We can perhaps understand this creative process of stellar teaching if, by analogy, we look at how the great artist Alberto Giacometti confronted each creation:

> In order to go on, to hope, to believe that there is some chance of his actually creating what he ideally visualizes, he is obliged to feel that it is necessary to start his entire career over again every day, as it were, from scratch. . . . he often feels that the particular sculpture or painting on which he happens to be working at the moment is that one which will for the very first time express what he subjectively experiences in response to an objective reality (Quoted in May, 1975, p. 83).

The teacher's engagement with students parallels Giacometti's quest: Each class begins as if starting the "entire career over again every day, as it were, from scratch." The "discomforts" of the journey often result in "significant learning" for teachers and students (Joyce, 1984).

Yet at the same time the teacher, each day, brings greater skill and understanding to the classes. This increased awareness provides the means to move closer to the teacher's perception of the perfect class—the ideal model of what the class might be when each student is actively engaged in learning. To achieve that ideal requires a lifetime of effort and self-examination on the teacher's part. Refinement takes time. One does not become a great artist in a single school year.

Teachers sometimes describe those classroom encounters when intense learning takes place as "teachable days." Perhaps the highlight of these days is learning for the teacher:

> How many of those times do you remember? *Something happens.* A delicate warmth slides into parts of your being you didn't even realize were cold. The marrow of your bones begins to thaw. You feel a little lurch as your own consciousness, the teacher's voice, the entire web of sound and silence that holds the class together, the room itself, the very flow of time all shift to a different level. And suddenly it is Christmas morning, with students and teacher exchanging delightful gifts while bells silently chime; the old furniture around the room reflects a holiday gleam; your classmates' eyes sparkle and snap like confetti and you realize with the certainty of music how rare and valuable each inhabitant of that room has become, has always been. Or you find yourself trembling slightly with the terror and joy of knowledge, the immensity of existence and pattern and change. And when it ends and you must go, you reel from the room with flushed face, knowing you will never again be quite the same. You have learned (Leonard, 1968, pp. 8-9).*

Every teacher experiences these moments. Excellent teachers, the artistic teachers, have such experiences on a regular basis. They exhibit control over their materials and methods, an intense awareness of each student's learning styles and needs, an understanding that encourages students to participate in the creative act of learning.

All learning involves change as the learners gain new insights and comprehensions, new ways of perceiving and acting. During these moments the learner is transformed. Permanently altered by the creative act, the learner can feel the difference.

> At its best, its most effective, its most unfettered, the moment of learning is a moment of delight. This essential and obvious truth is demonstrated for us every day by the baby and the preschool child, by the class of the "artist" teacher, by learners of all ages interacting with new learning programs that are designed for success (Leonard, 1968, p. 20).*

It is these moments of "delight" that the teacher savors. These times transform students' lives. Teachers who can achieve the moments abide in students' memories. They are the first-grade teachers who show their students they can read, the history teachers who evoke the romance of the unknown, the mathematics teachers who demonstrate the beauty of an equation. They are legion.

*From *Education and Ecstasy* by George B. Leonard. pp. 8-9; 20. Copyright © 1968 by George B. Leonard. Reprinted by permission of Dell Publishing Co., Inc.

Toward Mastery

To attain those moments of joy when learning occurs on a systematic basis requires extensive preparation and training. Nearly anyone can teach a lesson effectively once. But only gifted teachers can ensure that learning occurs for a variety of students again and again. Before teachers can achieve artistic mastery, they must learn the rudiments of teaching (Rubin, 1985). Just as the artist in music or art or literature must know the elements of the discipline, the types of media and their effects, and the techniques of the craft, so also the teacher must be knowledgeable about the discipline of teaching and about the methods and materials available, and then be able to approach each student with suitable learning experiences that encourage the student to learn. Each of these aspects of teaching implies that the teacher has mastered the fundamentals—a strong foundation in subject content, in methods of teaching, and in learning theory. Such understanding requires time; only then can the artistry of teaching occur.

> ***"Sometimes after a really good class, I feel so fantastic. I can't believe it. The kids know it. They can feel it. There's a great kind of working together. Cooperation. Everybody's together learning. Classes like that are so fine. I wish they would never end. They make me glad I'm a teacher. It's days like that that let you go on."***
>
> *Mary S.*
> *History Teacher*

Major figures in modern art—Cezanne, Picasso, O'Keeffe, Pollock—were all fine craftsmen, well schooled in the history, the techniques, the colors, and the textures of their craft. This grounding in the knowledge of their art was essential before they became masters. Each was in control of the medium, putting a unique stamp on the subjects depicted. Each was a master of the science of light and color and perspective. It is easy to forget what understanding and control of technique were required before Picasso could create "Guernica" or before Pollock did one of his action paintings. Like all masters, they were able to make their incredible work appear easy because they had so completely mastered their craft. Then and only then, when they were fully conversant with their materials, could they transcend them, making their vision a unique recreation of their world.

Learning, like great art, is a recreation of the world. The learner's understandings and perceptions are transformed. The world is never the same again for that individual. Just as great artists must master their techniques before they can transcend them, great teachers need a thorough grounding before they can lead their students on journeys in which they recreate their worlds. While learning to teach, teachers go through a series of transformations: from student teaching to a concern with "survival," where the main consideration is personal adequacy; to a "mastery" stage where teachers focus on content, methods of teaching, and the development of teaching skills; and finally to the third stage—"impact"—where teachers are most heedful of their influence upon students (Fuller, 1969).

During these various stages, the teacher is refining control of materials, techniques, and understanding of students—building a repertoire upon which to draw. To achieve this growth requires that great teachers, like great artists, continue to practice, to reflect upon understandings and skills, and to polish their mastery. No teacher, of course, is ever complete, but is always in the process of becoming.

Unlike the teacher who gives up or who withdraws, the artist-teacher confronts the challenge of becoming. Welcoming each new step on the journey toward mastery, such teachers are committed to achieving moments of joy in learning. The insightful teacher realizes that this is a lifelong endeavor in which the primary responsibility rests with the individual teacher. These teachers are engaged in a "sense of future possibility and a sense of what might be," and they stand in stark contrast to those teachers "who are alienated, passive, and unquestioning" (Greene, 1978, pp. 3-4). Artistic teachers continuously engage in transformations, both personally and professionally, as they help their students to learn and to grow. Wholeheartedly, they are engaged with their students in the fascinating adventure of learning.

The Science of Teaching

N. L. Gage has suggested that excellent teaching combines the artistic with the scientific. To be an artistic teacher requires that one employs creative, intuitive methods and at the same time draws upon empirical studies about effective teaching and learning. Artistic teachers are able to combine what is known about learning to fit their particular students:

> As a practical art, teaching must be recognized as a process that calls for intuition, creativity, improvisation, and expressiveness—a process that leaves room for departures from what is implied by rules, formulas, and algorithms. In teaching, by whatever method it proceeds—even in the fixed programs of computer-assisted instruction—there is a need for artistry: in the choice and use of motivational devices, clarifying definitions and examples, pace, redundancy, and the like.
>
> When teaching goes on in face-to-face interaction with students, the opportunity for artistry expands enormously. No one can ever prescribe successfully all the twists and turns to be taken as the lecturer, the discussion leader, or the classroom teacher uses judgment, sudden insight, sensitivity, and agility to promote learning (Gage, 1978, p. 15).*

Such skills enable teachers to strive systematically for those special "teachable" moments when learning occurs. Knowing the scientific basis of teaching increases the teachers' repertoires; it provides a conceptual framework to draw upon in particular classroom incidents. Teachers must know and must be able to apply the variables that are conducive to learning, and they must be able to know when to apply them.

Knowlege of scientific concepts and hypotheses is not sufficient, however. Theories must be individualized, as appropriate. The research generalizations, the scientific bases, require intuition and creativity when they are applied. Gage (1978) notes, "But using the science to achieve practical ends requires artistry—the artistry that enters into knowing when to follow the implications of the laws, generalizations, and trends, and especially, when not to, and how to combine two or more laws or trends to solving a problem" (p. 18). The artistic teacher knows the scientific generalizations well enough to apply them, as appropriate, and to ignore them when inappropriate.

*From *The Scientific Basis of the Art of Teaching* by N.L. Gage, p. 15. Copyright © 1978 by Teachers College Press. Reprinted by permission of Teachers College Press.

> ***"When I look back on my early years of teaching, I'm astounded I did as well as I did. At times there were real disasters. Those first couple of years were traumatic. I was always playing catch-up. Now it's better because of how much I've learned. The process of learning is so minute that it hardly seems you're improving. Then, you look back and suddenly you realize you've made huge gains. You know how to reach kids you couldn't reach before. Wow, I mean, this really is a job you can grow in. It's taken a long tme, but I've really developed my skills. I have all kinds of materials I've developed. And I've learned dozens of strategies and techniques to use with my classes. Those skills take a long time to learn and practice."***
>
> *Nancy E.*
> *Third Grade Teacher*

Like all great artists, the skilled teacher knows when to forget the generalizations. But this requires time, patience, and professional development. Josiah Royce pointed out nearly a century ago, "When you teach you must know when to forget formulas; but you must have learned them in order to forget them" (Quoted in Gage, 1978, p. 20). Great teaching transforms pedagogy and subject matter into the joy of learning. Great teaching is transcendent, encouraging students to become more than they are by discovering who they might be.

The Calling

People sometimes ask teachers why they continue to teach when the economic rewards are so small and the responsibilities are so great. It might be equally appropriate to ask Renoir why he continued to paint when he was so little valued and his art failed to sell. "Because I must," Renoir would reply. So it is with great teachers. They have what was referred to in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a "calling." This term may seem quaint or outmoded today. But when artistic teachers talk about why they teach, it is clear they love what they are doing, believe they are helping students, and believe their daily actions will influence the future. Their lives are enriched by teaching others. They are connected, through the service of teaching, to something larger than themselves. They are links between the past and the future. They conserve the past by transmitting it to their students. They create the future by teaching their students to be the innovators of tomorrow. (Reflection A describes methods for encouraging teachers to be innovators.)

These teachers have the same characteristics that identify all creative people. They possess, first of all, what Rollo May calls "creative courage." This type of courage is especially vital in "the discovering of new forms, new symbols, new patterns on which a new society can be built":

> Every profession can and does require some creative courage. In our day, technology and engineering, diplomacy, business, and certainly teaching, all of these professions and scores of others are in the midst of radical change and require courageous persons to appreciate and direct this change. The need for creative courage is in direct proportion to the degree of change the profession is undergoing (May, 1975, pp. 21-22).

The artistic teachers who have mastered the content and skills of teaching, and who are committed to improving their profession, can be especially valuable leaders in helping schools improve. After all, a commitment to improving the future is what teaching has always been about.

Coda

Perhaps the distinguishing characteristic of artistic teachers is their fundamental belief that they can make a difference in the lives of students. These teachers have a sense of efficacy—a sense that they can change students by helping them to learn and to grow. In addition to loving their subject matter and believing it is important, they convey their enthusiasm about learning to their students. They maintain that learning and teaching are vital, and that all students can learn if given appropriate opportunities and encouragement. As Joseph Epstein (1981) notes, "What all the great teachers appear to have in common is love of their subject, an obvious satisfaction in arousing this love in their students, and an ability to convince them that what they are being taught is deadly serious" (p. xii).

Such teachers take responsibility for assuring that each day, in each class, learning occurs. Despite inattentive students or less than adequate working conditions, despite disappointments, artistic teachers continue to strive with all their energy for successes. They are distinguished by their belief that they can make a difference in the lives of their students. Artistic teachers are able to see beyond today's stress, fatigue, and problems. They attempt to change the stressful situations. These teachers see themselves as engaged in a significant activity that will affect students in the future. They share a common faith that teaching, whatever its frustrations or disappointments, is in fact a calling, an opportunity to significantly shape the future through the pupils they teach. Yet they fully understand that "teaching is tough" (Cruickshank and others, 1980).

Because they look beyond the bad day or the defensive student, they continue to commit their energies to trying again. Like any professional, teachers have bad days when nothing seems to work, but as professionals they know that they can evoke, on other days, those "teachable" moments when intense learning occurs. Focusing on the successes enables them to continue in spite of setbacks. Everyday becomes for them a new challenge, a new chance to motivate the unmotivated, to reach the unreachable, to touch the future by carrying out what their profession demands: To live with the hope that all children can learn and that teachers can inspire students. These teachers are filled with optimism and hope. They learn from their disappointments and increase their resolve. Instead of giving in to their doubts, excellent teachers learn from their mistakes. They have faith that they, like their students, can change their behaviors and continue to grow personally and professionally.

What the artistic teachers possess in abundance is what Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, in *A Passion for Excellence* (1985), have described as "passion":

> Courage and self-respect are the lion's share of passion: It's hanging in long after others have gotten bored or given up; it's refusing to leave well enough alone; it means that anything less than the best you can imagine really bothers you, maybe keeps you awake at night. It usually means sticking your neck out: daring to give your best shot to something you care about and asking others to do the same is self-exposing. . . . Passion opens you to criticism, disappointment, disillusionment and failure, any one of which is enough to scare off all but the bravest souls. But the passionate, courageous, self-respecting people we know, when challenges or risks loom before them, regard them as something to be faced (p. 415).*

Such teachers are indeed the artists of the profession, whom students never forget. They are unforgettable because they have the courage to act on their commitments to students. They transmit their passion to their colleagues and their students by their enthusiasm and their love of learning. Committed to greatness each time they enter their classroom, they are willing to invest the time and practice necessary to ensure that they can make a difference in the lives of those they teach. They care.

*From *A Passion for Excellence: The Leadership Difference* by Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, p. 415. Copyright © 1985 by Thomas J. Peters and Nancy K. Austin. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.

Reflection A
Teachers As Innovators

In an article entitled "Ten Proven Methods for Hatching Brilliant Ideas," Robert B. Tucker (1985), an expert on innovation, describes how innovative ideas become new products and services. Tucker notes that "everybody has ideas," but "not everybody *works* with those ideas in such a way as to create new opportunities and solve problems" (p. 86).

Truly innovative people, Tucker maintains, become "idea factories" by looking ahead toward greater achievements. Tucker describes three types of thinking—victim, sustainer, and innovator. Listed below are characteristics of these various modes of thinking. It is interesting to contrast the modes:

Victim Mode

- Preoccupied with past
- Self-talk consists of "shoulda, coulda, mighta, wish I had"
- Reliving the past
- Filled with negative ideas

Sustainer Mode

- Preoccupied with present
- Looks at what works today
- Orientation is short-term
- Ideas are not important—"dime a dozen"
- Looking for guarantees and certainties
- Wants to avoid risk
- Fears mistakes

Innovator Mode

- Looks at ideas as future realities
- Searches out other people with ideas
- Values experiments and risks
- Enjoys being creative
- Filled with optimism

Ten Steps for Creating Innovative Ideas*

If you want to move into the Innovator Mode, Tucker offers ten steps that you may find helpful in increasing your innovative ideas:

1. Give yourself plenty of dream space—relax.
2. Enhance your environment for maximum creativity—pamper yourself.
3. Seek out idea-oriented people—who are your creative colleagues?
4. Draw out people's creativity at every opportunity—start listening.
5. Break out of your everyday routines—stretch your limits: "Go against your natural tendencies."
6. Impose deadlines on yourself—overcome your fear of acting on ideas.
7. Become an expert in your areas of innovation—what's working? Can you adopt it?
8. Focus on where other "idea people" got ideas—look for "sources of inspiration."
9. Look for ideas by studying problems—what connections do you see?
10. Protect your ideas from negative people—nurture your ideas.

*Adapted from "Ten Proven Methods for Hatching Brilliant Ideas" by Robert B. Tucker in *Republic Magazine* (October 1985), pp. 86-101. Copyright © 1985 by Robert B. Tucker. Reprinted by permission of Robert B. Tucker

For more information on this topic, see Denis E. Waitley and Robert B. Tucker, *Winning the Innovation Game* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, Co., 1986).

From
Apprentice to Master:
The Stages of Teaching

15

Excellent teachers are dynamic. They change and grow throughout their careers, and their interests and concerns in the classroom change as they mature. These concerns are related to how they see themselves at particular stages in their careers (Yarger and Mertens, 1980). Personal needs and professional needs change as adults mature (Knowles, 1978). Different types of learning activities, self-directed and job-directed, can stimulate involvement.

Teachers typically pass through three major stages, according to Frances F. Fuller (1969). During the first stage, the beginning years, teachers are worried about "survival" in the classroom and their personal adequacy. In the second stage, teachers focus on "mastery"—refining their skills in teaching and becoming more knowledgeable about subject matter. Finally, in the third stage, teachers consider "impact"; their concern during this period is how they influence students (Fuller, 1969, pp. 207-226). Each of these stages embodies new knowledge and techniques as teachers become increasingly comfortable in the classroom and have greater control over their teaching styles and techniques.

More recently, Peter Burke, Judith Christensen, and Ralph Fessler (1984) identified eight stages that many teachers go through. Career cycles of teachers are affected by the environment in which they work. These stages might be viewed as more elaborate descriptions of teachers' professional lives. Each stage reveals different personal and professional concerns. A positive career progression depends on the types of organizational support and encouragement a teacher receives. Not every teacher goes through each phase.

> *Preservice.* The preservice stage is the period of preparation for a specific professional role. Typically, this would be the period of initial preparation in a college or university. . . .
>
> *Induction.* The induction stage is generally defined as the first few years of employment, when the teacher is socialized into the system. It is a period when a new teacher strives for acceptance by students, peers, and supervisors and attempts to achieve a comfort and security level in dealing with everyday problems and issues. . . .
>
> *Competency Building.* During this stage of the career cycle, the teacher is striving to improve teaching skills and abilities. The teacher seeks out new materials, methods, and strategies. Teachers at this stage are receptive to new ideas, attend workshops and conferences willingly, and enroll in graduate programs through their own initiative. Their job is seen as challenging and they are eager to improve their repertoire of skills.
>
> *Enthusiastic and Growing.* At this stage teachers have reached a high level of competence in their job but continue to progress as professionals. Teachers in this stage love their jobs, look forward to going to school and to the interaction with their students, and are constantly seeking new ways to enrich their teaching. Key ingredients here are enthusiasm and high levels of job satisfaction. . . .

> *Career Frustration.* This period is characterized by frustration and disillusionment with teaching. Job satisfaction is waning, and teachers begin to question why they are doing this work. Much of what is described as teacher burnout in the literature occurs in this stage. While this sense of frustration tends to occur most often during a mid-point in one's career, there is an increasing incidence of such feelings among teachers in relatively early years of their careers. . . .
>
> *Stable but Stagnant.* Stable but stagnant teachers have resigned themselves to putting in "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay." They are doing what is expected of them, but little more. They may be doing an acceptable job but are not committed to the pursuit of excellence and growth in the profession. These teachers are often just going through the motions to fulfill the terms of their contracts, and they tend to be the most difficult to deal with in terms of professional development programs. . . .
>
> *Career Wind-Down.* This is the stage when a teacher is preparing to leave the profession. For some, it may be a pleasant period in which they reflect on the many positive experiences they have had and look forward to a career change or retirement. For others, it may be a bitter period. . . . A person may spend several years at this stage, or it may occur only during a matter of weeks or months.
>
> *Career Exit.* The exiting stage of a teacher's career represents the period of time after the teacher leaves the job, but includes other circumstances than simply retirement after many years of service. It could be a period of unemployment after involuntary or elective job termination or a temporary career exit for child rearing. It could also be a time of alternative career exploration or of moving to a nonteaching position in education such as administration (pp. 14-16).*

During the latter phases, especially *Career Frustration, Stable but Stagnant, and Career Wind-Down,* teachers have a difficult time maintaining enthusiasm for teaching. The joy and love of the *Enthusiastic and Growing* phase needs to be extended into the later parts of the career. Burke, Christensen, and Fessler suggest that these stages do not constitute a lock-step progression. Rather, the process is described as "an ebb and flow, with teachers moving in and out of stages in response to both personal and organizational environmental influences" (p. 16). Establishing a school environment that nurtures teachers' enthusiasm for teaching and their commitment to excellence requires schools that emphasize personal and professional growth. A culture of renewal at the building can help teachers grow and learn throughout their teaching careers. An awareness of the dynamic, changing nature of teachers' lives—including various growth and developmental needs—has implications for the differing types of professional growth opportunities that should be available. A greater variety of opportunities, based on individual differences in adult learners, will encourage increased teacher growth.

*From *Teacher Career Stages: Implications for Staff Development* by Peter J. Burke, Judith C. Christensen, and Ralph Fessler, pp. 14-16. Copyright © 1984 by the Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation. Reprinted by permission of Phi Delta Kappa.

The First Year of Teaching

There is an old joke commonly told by teachers which says that some teachers teach for 30 years and others teach one year 30 times. Yet there are enormous changes that teachers undergo during that first year and continue to undergo throughout their teaching careers. That first year of teaching can make or break a teacher. For some, the experience is so traumatic, they leave teaching. For others, it is a year they would not want to repeat but that they nonetheless learned from (Ryan, 1970; Howey and Bents, 1979; Howey and Gardner, 1983).

The major problem most first-year teachers face is a lack of confidence. They are unsure about how to proceed. One veteran teacher who has been teaching for 16 years recalled her first year as a time of fear:

> I was scared. I was afraid of the kids. I was afraid to let them know that I was the one in charge. That was a big difference. Now, it's funny, even when I'm away from school and see a kid acting up, I say, "Hey you, go over there and sit." I've still got that teacher in me now and the kid'll look at me like, "Who the heck does she think she is?"—because they don't know I'm a teacher.

Many teachers report that, coupled with the lack of self-confidence, there were uncertainties about how to discipline, how to draw the line. One teacher noted:

> In my first year, my style of discipline was not nearly as good as now. I overreacted a lot, underrated a lot, just didn't have a feel for it. I don't think I taught the kids nearly as much as I do now. I didn't have as good a knowledge of the materials. I was doing everything for the first time. Each time you do something you get better. It's like hitting a golf ball. After ten years you know what works and what doesn't and you develop consistency. That's the way it was; I was feeling my way through.

The sense of "feeling my way" is characteristic of the initial year. One teacher reported of her first year that, although "I loved it, ... I was a lot more insecure. I wanted the children to love me." The need to be accepted and valued is especially important for first-year teachers.

At the same time, first-year teachers experience a sense of being overwhelmed. Unsure of themselves and their teaching, they tend to rely on familiar methods and materials. "I think that maybe it was much more rote," said one respondent. "I did a lot more lecturing and a lot less inquiry, group dynamic work, research," said another. "I spoon-fed at first," said another teacher. "That's what I am trying to get away from now."

Problems with discipline, course materials, and methods of teaching combine to make the first year an unforgettable experience. Finding time to do all of these things is often reported as a problem:

> I don't believe I have ever worked so hard in my life, and the teacher that I taught right next to was a role model. He was excellent, and he was so at ease. I guess I was overwhelmed simply by him and by the fact that I wanted to do as well as he did. I had no materials and there was no typing—they would do no typing for you and I didn't type. So any type of worksheet, handout, review, or anything, I had to make. I guess time and the desire to be good were my major concerns.

Yet very few teachers indicated that they went to colleagues for help. Typical is the comment of an English teacher:

> I was too stupid to figure out that other people's experience could help me. Too proud, too much of a rookie, and I didn't think anybody would want to talk to me or sit there and listen to me. I didn't think they'd be interested in helping. I kind of had that feeling. The English department faculty in that school wasn't nearly as good as the school I'm at now in the first place. Not nearly as close-knit. So I didn't ask them questions at first. That's another thing you learn as you go along: to not be afraid to ask someone else. It is in any job. Who to go to with what problem. I wasn't very good about that at first.

Another teacher who began as a mid-year replacement had a similar feeling of being isolated, of having no one she could talk with:

> I had no one to turn to. I needed to talk to people about the awful or wonderful things that were happening, but I just didn't know anyone. It was mid-year and enthusiasm for teaching tends to drop after Christmas.
>
> It was a bad year. The principal's interaction with people was really bad that year. And people were just really down. I wasn't in school myself that year and that's a down time for me. I need to be in school and around other professional people.
>
> It was hard because there was no program, and I was expected to do the program. But there wasn't anyone to kick it around with. I had a lot of great ideas—or what I thought were great ideas—but I needed feedback.

Having tended to stay by themselves and to not avail themselves of colleagues who could help, first-year teachers often recall being exhausted during that initial year. One teacher, now in her tenth year, summed up the feelings of many:

> Tired. I was disappointed. I had taken so long to prepare for this job and had had good teaching experiences at the lower level before and had substituted for two years. Substituting was a wonderful experience. I was simply disappointed with my first real teaching assignment.
>
> The kids weren't what I expected. I later found out that they had taken the bottom 70 kids and stuck them in my classroom, so I never had any of the top kids. A mixture of both is very important.
>
> And the materials I tried to use, the students didn't care; they didn't even want to be there. There were no desks. I had to go into the basement and dig out dusty old desks.

Those teachers who survived the first year and continued in teaching saw themselves as increasingly gaining mastery and skill the longer they stayed in teaching. As their confidence grew and their skills improved, these teachers saw themselves as more finely skilled practitioners. Most of the teachers, because they remembered their turmoil during their first year, said that they tried to go out of their way to talk with and support first-year teachers. Providing organizational support and time when first-year teachers can share their feelings with other first-year teachers, and creating opportunities so that first-year teachers can work with more experienced teachers, can alleviate feelings of isolation and strengthen the teaching skills of new teachers. Equally important, working with new teachers allows master teachers to refine their understanding of classroom life and reinforce their teaching skills.

The Refinement of Teaching Skills

Unlike professions such as law and medicine, which seem mysterious and foreign, teaching is familiar to most people. For the general public, many of whom have been in elementary and high schools for 12 years, the activities and routines of teaching seem commonplace. There are familiar rituals and rhythms (Lieberman and Miller, 1984). Unlike courtrooms or hospitals, which are removed from most people's everyday experiences, schools seem ordinary. After all, a high school graduate has spent years—480 weeks or 12,000 hours by one estimate—in classrooms (Eisner, 1985, p. 87). Beneath the surface, however, there is dynamic interaction between teacher and students that involves intense interpersonal exhanges and hundreds of decisions. What appears ordinary from the students' perspective may be entirely different from that of the teachers, who view effective teaching as a complex, demanding endeavor involving skills that require years of practice and refinement.

Most teachers interviewed suggested that they were not particularly successful when they began. But over a period of years they could trace their development from being an average teacher to becoming an *A* teacher. A typical response comes from a mathematics teacher who has completed his sixth year of teaching:

> I think the third year I was teaching, I had learned the ropes enough: effective methods, what to teach and what not to teach, and how to handle discipline and kids. I think the third year out of the six I've been in the classroom, I was to the point that I would rate myself an *A* teacher. And I'm still learning. I'll be a better teacher next year than I was this year. In my twentieth year, I'm going to be a better teacher than I was my ninth year.

Another teacher indicated it had taken her "10, maybe 12 years" to become a master teacher. She described the process of moving toward being an excellent teacher as a series of steps:

> I think role models were important at first. When I came out of college, I had a mind set on "this is what a teacher is supposed to be like." But I've found that I matured in my position and found that I could be me. I could do it my way. My methodology is a lot different than just the straight *read, recite, regurgitate,* or *lecture*. But it is more meaningful to the student and to me because it is me. I think it was being able to be me in the classroom and use myself as a vehicle to impart the knowledge. I couldn't be a fake because they could read right through it. I began to change my expectations of what teaching is. Although I never felt uncomfortable in front of a group of students, I guess maybe it was what I felt that my peers expected of me more. My methods have changed as I've become more skilled and controlled in the classroom.

A similar view was heard from a social studies teacher who tries to make her students active in her classroom:

> I use a great deal of inquiry. I use a lot of group work. I incorporate fiction and nonfiction within the subject matter. I ask a lot of students, but I find that I lose them if I lecture them constantly. The problem basically is getting them active. I have got to turn them loose. I have to get them involved or they will forget it right after the test. I think that is the hardest thing to do. You figure out what you want to get across—and your goal—and then you have got to vary the way you impart that.

Another teacher described a parallel process of how she has changed. Her working with all of the students in her classes became more systematic:

> At first, my teaching was haphazard. I used to think you just had an ability to work with certain kids. I think that you just sort of have an ability. I didn't know how, but with those kids I reach I didn't know how I reached them sometimes. It was sort of a gut-level feeling.
>
> You might sit up all night reviewing what you have done. But it is not a book or something someone has taught somewhere. It just happens. You hit on it in the middle of the night, and then you try it and it works. But the more I taught, the better able I was to individualize. I was able to help kids learn more often.
>
> I think that through working with students over the years, I am able to understand better each type as I come across those types more often. The technique or piece of reading material—whatever it is that turns them on—I've come across it. I have more experiences in my background to draw on.

The process of becoming a master teacher requires a long-term commitment. Teachers indicated that it took from 3 to 12 years before they considered themselves fully capable teachers. Each of them agreed that they continued to learn more about being effective each year that they taught. In fact, one of the key ingredients in their success as teachers was their ability to continue to grow as they refined their teaching skills. One teacher summed up this attitude as "self-motivation" about becoming a better teacher—being a "positive person" about his own growth:

> It's all in the attitude. With the kids and with the teachers. If you go into it knowing that you are going to enjoy it, looking forward to the morning, putting in the extra time or whatever it takes. That's what makes the job a pleasure. Spending extra time after school with kids and doing the extracurricular things. Anything you are positive about you're going to do a better job with. Keeping current and trying to do my best helps me keep my teaching fresh.

Instead of seeing teaching as a job anyone can do, the excellent teachers view themselves as having mastered a series of increasingly complex tasks in their careers. Not content with simply lecturing, they strive to tailor the subject matter and methods to each student. Increasing their repertoire of skills not only enhances their classroom abilities but also helps them maintain their enthusiasm for teaching students.

Growth Versus Stagnation

Many of the teachers who were interviewed could not identify with colleagues who were "burned out" or who were not motivated to excel: They wanted to emulate excellent teachers, and could not understand what had happened to colleagues who had given up or who were just going through the motions. The teachers we interviewed were inspired by their excellent colleagues and depressed by colleagues who were not doing their best.

Excellent teachers are highly motivated and deeply concerned about students. One teacher described her excellent colleagues as "able to look beyond themselves":

> They are concerned about the students. Not just in that the students gather the information and take it in and get an *A* on a test, but that students come to enjoy learning or to interact or to make it meaningful to them. These teachers are usually in school taking more graduate classes. They seem to go beyond themselves. They don't see their classroom as their only teaching area. They have a more global attitude.

Then there are others who appear to lack a sense of commitment to teaching. Teachers interviewed spoke of those who were not giving their best and saw them as not valuing their work as teachers. One teacher said:

> They go to work. It's a 9 to 5 job or a 7:30 to 3:30 job, and they go home and they do what they do. The next morning they come to school to work. They are there for social reasons, also. They come to see their friends rather than come to try and grow as a person. I guess they don't see teaching as a career or a profession. Maybe sometimes they can't. Maybe the schools don't let teachers think of themselves as professionals sometimes, so they're just earning a living.

A similar sentiment was voiced by a teacher near retirement who said he tried to always be enthusiastic. But he knew peers about his own age who had stopped trying:

> I don't know how you could go on if you knew you weren't good at your job, but they go on day-to-day. They don't care, or maybe they're just tired of fighting.
>
> I don't know if they ever saw it differently. I don't know because they think they are doing a good job. They will defend what they are doing anyway. Maybe they get set in a pattern. Most of them haven't returned to school. They just aren't stimulated.
>
> They've stopped growing. They've stopped looking for different ways to do it. I presented something five years ago completely differently than the way I did it this year, because I may have read somewhere how you can do it differently, or I may have walked past the class of another teacher teaching that material and sat out there and listened and got excited to try it. Or a teacher came to me and asked how I do something. We share ideas.

Self-Renewal and Motivation

The lack of colleagues' motivation was cited frequently by teachers interviewed. Even though teachers teach behind closed doors (Goodlad, 1984), teachers know about colleagues' performance through the school's "grapevine." One veteran teacher said that several colleagues, two of whom were personal friends, had simply lost interest:

> They are no longer interested in teaching. It isn't something that excites them anymore. It's something that they are doing because they have got to make a buck to support the family. They've been at it 25 years and have 5 years to go to retirement, so they might as well ride it out. It's too late to do anything else. And that probably doesn't give them a very good self-concept for what they're doing. I would hope it doesn't, because they are not doing the job. They're tired of kids. They don't understand why kids today aren't like they were 25 years ago. They are unbending and unwilling to change with the times. They've taught the same thing 25 times, 25 years, 5 times a day, whatever that comes out to, and it's not exciting to them anymore.

This teacher said of his own teaching that he was concerned throughout his career with renewing himself. "I deliberately try new things to stretch myself. I'm growing, I hope." His students and colleagues agree he is one of the best teachers they have ever seen.

Teachers recognize how important a good self-concept is in growth. Without attempting to grow and improve, teachers settle in. One ten-year veteran teacher said,

> I think, in any profession, persons with any kind of self-concept or drive or motivation should expect themselves to continually improve and grow in their profession. I don't know. That sounds like something straight out of a textbook. But when I get to the point I feel like I'm not getting any better, or I'm in a rut—not improving—it's time to go do something else. Or time for something to shake up the apathetic teachers a little bit and motivate themselves. These people are fighting themselves, and they're not doing their job. Maybe that's why they're fighting themselves.

A recurrent theme among the teachers interviewed was a sense of motivation among excellent teachers compared with a lack of excitement among mediocre teachers. One veteran teacher contrasted his colleagues in terms of excitement:

> There are some teachers there who are worthless. They come in and they are using the same lesson plans from 20 years ago and the same tests. They're not teaching; they sit behind a desk and tell the kids to open the book and read so many pages. They're not excited about what they're doing, and the kids hate their classes. The kids don't do the work because they're not motivated to do it. They don't see any value in what they're learning in there. Such teachers are failures.
>
> On the other hand, there are a lot of teachers who are a lot better than I am. A lot of them who are in there just doing a fantastic job. We've got a 68-year-old lady in our school who has been teaching an awfully long time. She's just great. She teaches English. She does a great job with the kids, and they love her. She is like a grandma to them. And she has the greatest working knowledge of the material of anyone probably in the entire English department in the system. She is still excited about what she is doing.

Running throughout the interviews was the notion of excitement. One fifth-year teacher told of her colleagues' work, which inspired her:

> I think they are highly motivated people to begin with. They are also people who are able to communicate, to be enthusiastic even though they have bad days. They are able to put aside something that might have happened outside school. They do their job even on bad days. They are people with a high self-concept. You've got to think you are doing a pretty good job and believe in what you are doing and in yourself. I think the best teachers all fall into that category. And they love kids.

In contrast to these teachers are the apathetic ones—those who no longer care or who appear unmotivated. One secondary teacher at mid-career summed up the frustration of working with apathetic colleagues:

> I feel I've seen some of the best teachers in my school district, but I've also seen some of the worst. Not that they didn't have the training. But after a while, they got apathetic. That is sad to see.
>
> I walked into one teacher's room in first grade, and they were watching "Mission Impossible." I thought, Why are you wasting your time with this when there are so many things to do? And you are wasting their time. And I think the teacher was embarrassed that I caught her in that.
>
> I would say apathy bothers me the most. Some of them have been there over ten years, and they've gotten comfortable with things. For the most part, they're okay, but they're not outstanding; they're not working to do the best for their kids. And that is what I like to see in a teacher. That's what I like my kids to have. I feel that I'm giving my utmost so I expect everybody to do that.

The sense of expectation about what one is capable of achieving distinguishes the excellent teacher from the average one.

Expectations about what one should do as a teacher are transmitted to students. One elementary teacher who has taught for nine years talked about the impact of personal expectations on students:

> A teacher seems to gain some type of reputation. You may not know the students before they walk into your class, but they know you. I think the number-one concern is maintaining discipline and maintaining self-discipline among the students. Some classrooms are zoos. I think it stems from a lack of respect for the teacher, a knowledge that they can get away with murder. And in some cases, it is a frustration that nothing is going on in the class.
>
> The other type of teacher that bothers me would be one that I call a rote teacher. A teacher who goes in year after year with the same lesson plans. This is day 63; therefore, I go to my notebook; I have my lecture all written out; my test has been written for 10 years. He spends his time. It's 30 years and out, and, to me, that type of person does not belong in a classroom.

The teachers agreed that not working up to one's potential has an effect on teachers' self-esteem. One described colleagues who seemed to be just putting in time:

> I think they have got to be very, very miserable. I cannot imagine going into class after class with no discipline, no mutual respect. I think they feel bad. I think they feel as though the administration possibly has not given them the help that they need. I sometimes believe they feel trapped in a field they can no longer do well in. Some of them might have been good teachers at one time. That's not to say all poor teachers are older because they are not; but to have the feeling of being trapped in an occupation that you no longer want, that must be terrible.

For excellent teachers, the striving to ensure that all students learn enhances their feeling of self-worth. They feel good about themselves because they know they are doing their best. One teacher summed up this attitude:

> I am a perfectionist; I'll never meet my goal. I want to make a mark. Not so much that students will say, 'She was so wonderful in my education.' But at the end of the year, I have to feel I have given them something that they wouldn't have had from anybody else. Whether it is the depth of knowledge, whether it is imparting self-confidence, I want to make a difference for my students. I'll never make my goal of reaching all of them. But I try.

Those teachers who continue to strive and to grow, whatever their career stage, can provide excellent role models for other teachers. Most important, they demonstrate by their actions each day that teaching and learning are important.

Opportunities for Growth

Teaching is often described as a "flat" profession. That is, the responsibilities and duties of the first-year teacher are essentially the same as for the teacher approaching retirement. There are few chances, economically or instructionally, to move upward. The good teacher with 5 years' experience is not offered greater opportunities after 15 or 25 years. This lack of movement can mean that teachers do not have the chance to mentor younger teachers, nor do they receive recognition for their increasing classroom skills. The lack of opportunities for new challenges may account for some teachers' career frustration and burnout (Boyer, 1983; Eisner, 1985; Feistritzer, 1983; Sizer, 1984).

What lies ahead for the teachers who have achieved mastery at mid-career? How do they continue to grow? Career ladders, which enable teachers to assume more complex responsibilities as their careers advance, may provide one method for promoting personal and professional growth. Many of the recent national reports on teaching recommend that career paths or career ladders be started so that teachers have the opportunity to advance in their profession. Whether the method is career ladders or some other type of teacher incentive, there is a need for career enhancement in teaching. Opportunities for growth are essential. These changes in responsibilities, such as mentoring younger, less experienced teachers, could be linked to different economic compensations as teachers receive promotions. Such promotions, according to the reports, should be based on performance evaluations that employ peer review and assessment (Schlechty and others, 1985).

Opportunities for career advancement with increasing responsibilities may encourage people to continue to grow throughout their teaching careers. According to Burke, Christensen, and Fessler (1984), "Key ingredients" for teachers who are at the *Enthusiastic and Growing* stage of their career are "high levels of job satisfaction" (p. 15). Teachers who have achieved high competence in their job want to continue to grow professionally. These teachers are a stark contrast to teachers who are assailed by career frustration and stagnation. The primary difference between these career stages is motivation. Teachers at the *Stable but Stagnant* stage of their careers "may be doing an acceptable job but are not committed to the pursuit of excellence and growth in the profession" (Burke, Christensen, and Fessler, p. 15). There should be opportunities available to ensure that teachers at all stages in their career are supported in doing the best they can.

Coda

The tasks and responsibilities of the first-year teacher and those of the 20-year veteran are quite similar. Teaching makes parallel demands on each teacher. Yet the personal needs of the beginning teacher differ substantially from those of the more experienced teacher. The clear implication of these different personal and professional needs is that more varied, individualized types of growth opportunities are required.

To become an artistic teacher requires time and effort. Most teachers interviewed, for example, believed it took nearly ten years before they became what they considered to be excellent teachers. Providing different types of professional support at the school building level for teachers in various career stages enhances personal and professional growth. Maintaining enthusiasm for the subject matter, keeping current with research, and tailoring instruction to each pupil are required of all teachers. So, too, are opportunities to learn new techniques and to share ideas with colleagues. Schools that emphasize lifelong learning for both teachers and students create a culture that values education. (Reflection B highlights some of the pervasive images of teaching and learning.) These schools provide opportunities for apprentice teachers to become artists.

Reflection B
Metaphors of Teaching and Learning

Metaphors and images of schools and teachers provide important insights into people's assumptions about the nature of teaching and learning. Some images encourage and reinforce the idea of teachers as artists; others depict teachers in more mundane roles.

In "Images of Schools," Phillip C. Schlechty and Anne Walker Joslin (1984) identify five pervasive metaphors of schools. It is interesting to consider the images of teachers that might be connected with the schools described below:

- the school as a factory
- the school as a hospital
- The school as a log in a pastoral setting with Mark Hopkins on one end and a motivated or able student on the other end
- the school as a family
- the school as a war zone

What images of teachers might be associated with these metaphors of school? What images of schools and teachers would enhance the artistry of teaching?

Chapter Three:

Personal Growth in Teaching

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Artistic teachers realize that personal and professional growth are cojoined. To be a master teacher requires, minimally, that one is professionally current—aware of the research and theory about effective teaching—and personally growing. Teachers who feel good about themselves and their profession, who have a feeling of efficacy and a sense that they are making a difference in the lives of students, are far more likely to be successful in their classrooms. This sense of personal and professional growth implies self-awareness and knowledge about the types of responses one makes in the classroom. The greater the amount of self-knowledge, the more choices one brings to teaching. Gerald Weinstein (1975) has noted that "the product of self-knowledge is to create more *response-ability*, more choice," and this self-understanding "increases the options for being"; it provides more freedom and flexibility in teaching (pp. xviii-xix). Self-knowledge, in effect, enables people to grow and to relate to other people in more productive, richer ways. Teachers who are open to new experiences and who are willing to admit the necessity for ongoing change are more flexible and more satisfied with themselves and their careers.

The Teaching Self

Attitudes and feelings directly affect behavior. Thus, it is especially important that teachers recognize and acknowledge how their feelings and beliefs affect classroom performance. The nature of how one teaches and how one sees one's "teaching self" has been studied extensively in the past decade. Richard L. Curwin and Barbara Schneider Fuhrmann (1975) outlined a seven-stage process for moving from self-awareness toward change. They suggest the process involves a close examination of what teachers would like to be—the ideal—versus how they are teaching now. Their model of change provides interesting insights into how teachers can move closer to their ideal teaching selves:

> **Stage One: Self-Awareness**
> Self-awareness refers to your understanding and awareness of the factors that screen your responses: past experiences, feelings, values, beliefs, attitudes, perceptions of your teaching self, goals, aspirations, and outside influences, as they relate to your teaching. Your screens provide you with direction and motivation for change....
>
> **Stage Two: Data Collection**
> You need data for comparing your ideals and your actions. The data must be nonevaluative and nonjudgmental....
>
> **Stage Three: Data Interpretation and Pattern Identification**
> Raw data reveals little about our teaching. It must be examined, with particular attention to pattern identification. Once the patterns are identified, you can begin to look at what the patterns mean in terms of effects and their congruence with your ideals....

Stage Four: Generating and Choosing Alternatives

Once you have looked at your data and discovered areas in which you wish to implement change, you need to generate alternative behaviors for experimentation.... Choosing an alternative is an important step, and we believe that with experience and practice you can learn to be a better chooser.

Stage Five: Experimenting with the Alternative

Once you have chosen an alternative, it can be tested in a real-life situation. You can try the new behavior to see if it is comfortable for you and to see if the alternative meets your needs. Try the behavior long enough so that it is given a fair chance.

Stage Six: Adoption or Rejection of Alternatives

After trying the alternative, you are able to adopt it because it is congruent with your ideals and comfortable for you or to reject it as not beneficial for you. You may also decide to modify this new behavior to better fit your personality and ideals.

Stage Seven: Recycling

Growth involves change. A behavior is not permanently adopted, modified, or rejected. Further input and new perspectives bring different considerations, so a decision may be changed or reconsidered any number of times. To take into account these changes, you can begin stage one over again and repeat the cycle (Curwin and Schneider Fuhrmann, 1975, pp. 8-9).*

The above description of personal change is noteworthy for several reasons. First, the authors suggest that change never occurs overnight; it is a long-term procedure. Second, change requires a willingness to take risks and to experiment with alternative behaviors. Third, the changes must feel comfortable; they must fit the individual's personality. Finally, Curwin and Schneider Fuhrmann imply that change is ongoing. Examining one's teaching practices is not an isolated episode; rather, it is a career-long endeavor that is constantly being refined. Just as the knowledge and research about teaching is constantly growing, so too is the teacher's need for introspection and self-understanding. The commitment to personal growth in teaching is the hallmark of the artistic teacher.

The Ingredients of Teacher Growth

The essence of teaching is a commitment to students' achievement. In a discussion with a group of talented teachers, four recurrent themes summarized what these teachers saw as quality teaching. These themes involve personal and professional *responsibility;* organizational and collegial *support;* more *time;* and, finally, greater *continuity* in professional growth and learning activities.

*From *Discovering Your Teaching Self: Humanistic Approaches to Effective Teaching* by Richard L. Curwin and Barbara Schneider Fuhrmann, pp. 8-9. Copyright © 1975 by Prentice-Hall, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Teachers as professionals need more choices in staff development. They want more options to encourage individual growth and achievement; more positive reinforcement; and more chances to select learning formats and inservice opportunities. The teachers concurred that they, like other professionals, are most aware of their needs. They felt they needed more flexible opportunities to satisfy these needs. Self-directed learning is important, as is a range of learning options.

"Classroom teachers tailor or adapt all the time because the first hour in the day they might have a lot of very accomplished American history students who are all going to take honors English; along about the third hour of the day, that same teacher is going to deal with other youngsters who have different interests and needs. So teachers are going to tailor through the day. It is a strength in our profession in that if you are a skilled classroom practitioner, you do this all day long."

Allan R.
History and Speech Teacher

The second theme—support—consists of two major types of assistance to improve teachers' instructional skills. First, teachers reported, they need leadership from administrators who recognize and value staff development. Especially crucial here, according to the teachers, are principals who promote a culture of personal and professional growth within the school itself. A second major type of support is colleagues and other master teachers who can demonstrate what is working and provide advice on how to improve in particular areas. This type of assistance could involve coaching and other kinds of discussions with peers. An important aspect is that this support must be nonjudgmental—colleagues helping one another with mutual inquiry and problem solving. Visits with other teachers, inside and outside the district, are very valuable because these master teachers provide models for methods and activities.

Teachers also recognize how important time is if change is to occur. The time element, according to teachers, is critical in three ways. They report the need for more time to work with students. They need more time to reflect upon and to plan lessons; this is especially necessary when trying to create and implement new curricular materials. Finally, they need more time to keep current with educational trends and new materials. Professional reading, curricular development, and the tailoring of materials to meet students' learning needs are key elements in meeting the responsibility of being a teacher.

The final vital area of support—continuity—is seen by teachers as a major factor in any meaningful change. A recurrent message is that one-time learning experiences—the daylong inservice programs—did not promote change or quality. Chances to visit other teachers, to learn and practice new methods, or to implement new classroom techniques are viewed as long-term efforts that need to be fostered. Three topics were mentioned as especially important in terms of ongoing growth: follow-up of staff development; continuity of promising programs; and lifelong learning to keep current.

The elements identified by these teachers—responsibility, support, time, and continuity—suggest that individuals' commitment to growth needs to be reinforced by colleagues and the school. A climate for learning is essential because change does not occur easily or quickly. At the same time, these teachers recognize that teaching and learning are inextricable. As one teacher said, "I didn't start learning until I started teaching."

Self-Directed Learning

Teachers need opportunities to take responsibility for their personal and professional growth. Like their students, teachers need opportunities for self-directed learning: "opportunities to learn how to choose *what* is to be learned, *how* it is to be learned, *when* it is to be learned, and *how to evaluate* their own progress" (Della-Dora and Blanchard, 1979). Deciding what they need to learn, and how to learn it, encourages teachers to be more aware not only of subject matter but also of themselves as learners. Such types of learning promote reflection and establish a foundation for lifelong learning.

Artistic teachers are perhaps more than anything else *students* of their own teaching. Self-directed study could encourage teachers to examine their teaching practices on a regular, systematic basis. Opportunities to look closely at their teaching practices help teachers examine learning alternatives for themselves and their students.

Models of Teaching

Artistic teachers have the ability to tailor lessons, drawing upon a variety of methods and activities to ensure student learning. Yet it is a gifted teacher indeed who is skilled in all of the teaching models available. According to Bruce Joyce, there are over 80 methods of teaching. The many types of instruction can be categorized in four ways: the personal growth of students; their preparation for national and world citizenship; their mastery of academic subjects; and their ability to use methods of inquiry for the study of disciplines (Joyce, 1978, p. 3). Teachers need to be able to draw upon a variety of teaching models to help their students achieve in all four areas.

Joyce has categorized the 80 models according to their distinctive features into four "families":

Social-Interaction Models
Information Processing Models
Personal Models
Behavior Modification/Cybernetic Models

Artistic teachers are adept at using a variety of these models as needed in their classes. Joyce has noted how all teachers can become adroit with various models of teaching, increasing their repertoire as they progress in their careers.

> Once a teacher masters the "basic" repertoire of models appropriate to his/her role, he or she can then expand it by learning new models and by combining and transforming the basic ones to create new ones. In the midst of a social studies unit, a teacher may use one model (for example, Inductive Thinking) to help children master map skills, and combine this model with group-dynamic models that help students attack social issues (for example, Group Investigation). A highly skilled performance in teaching blends the variety of models appropriately and embellishes them. Master teachers create new models of teaching and test them in the course of their work, drawing on the models of others for ideas that are combined in various ways (Joyce, 1978, p. 8).*

*From *Selecting Learning Experiences: Linking Theory and Practice* by Bruce R. Joyce, pp. 5-8. Reprinted with permission of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Copyright © 1978 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.

Refinement of the various models and the incorporation of new models into the classroom enable teachers to develop a rich repository of skills to enhance student achievement.

A Mosaic of Growth

Growth is a process; not an event. The growth of an artistic teacher is ongoing: the talent and skill are continuously being polished. According to Eliot Wigginton, editor of the Foxfire series and a teacher for 20 years, the best teachers are always engaged in professional growth:

> The best teachers I know are always actively involved in the process of becoming better teachers. Knowing that they may never be as good as they should be; and knowing that despite all they do, there will always be those students who will fall between the cracks, never touched or influenced in a positive way by their efforts; and knowing that they are human and that there will always be some students they will like more than others, despite themselves; and knowing that they will continue to make mistakes they will regret—they persist, determined if not to become the best teachers around, then at least to become better, year by year, in the practice of their craft. They never stand still. They never stop dead in their tracks. They grow, and that growth is observable (Wigginton, 1985, p. 275).**

Although growth may be slow and incremental, teachers reported that they could trace the changes and progress. They often remember, for example, a particular school year or unit that marked a turning point in skills. Such watersheds are especially frequent with gifted teachers who are introspective about their growth.

"It's a funny feeling when kids you taught years ago come back. Some of mine, they have kids of their own. It's hard to believe how fast the years go. It's so subtle. You only notice it really when the kids come back. Some you can't even remember. Some are like yesterday. Except now they're balding or starting to get middle-aged spread. Twenty-five years . . . but I don't really feel any different. I still love working with the kids. Just each year they get a little younger. That's how I know I'm getting along myself."

Frank E.
English Teacher

**From *Sometimes a Shining Moment: Twenty Years of Teaching in a High School Classroom* by Eliot Wigginton, p. 275. Copyright © 1985 by Brooks Eliot Wigginton. Reprinted by permission of Doubleday and Co., Inc.

Wigginton suggests that the best teachers he has seen tend to grow in discrete steps, and they "are actively involved in the process of becoming better teachers" (p. 275). These teachers are self-renewing individuals who keep themselves current. Wigginton has noted how the best teachers avoid burnout by being deeply involved. They "build relationships among their peers, fighting isolation with as much strength as they can muster." They "tend to be involved in the community from which their students are drawn in ways other than teaching." They go to community meetings, and have "numerous friendships outside the teaching profession." They also recognize that "adults are not finished products. They welcome being in a situation in which they can continue learning and growing." They have "become skillful at the art of sharing responsibilities with others to reduce their work loads and increase their effectiveness." These teachers also are "in balance . . . having enough fun with what they're doing that the temporary setbacks and disappointments and frustrations are seen in proper perspective" (pp. 275-283). These are the ingredients that help teachers sustain their enthusiasm and commitment.

Most of the teachers interviewed concur with Wigginton's philosophy. Many of them are doing what he recommends. Teachers who felt best about their personal lives also ranked their careers most highly. Most view themselves as keeping current with the research literature. They subscribe to journals, join professional associations, and often avail themselves of their school's professional development library. One activity highly valued by these teachers are visits with other teachers for observation and the sharing of ideas.

Though there are several state programs that would fund such visits, teachers were not aware of such programs as Teacher Development or Excellence in Education. The three teachers who had visited other effective teachers found the experience quite rewarding and worth repeating. The opportunity to exchange ideas through informal get-togethers, especially if college credit can be obtained, is another valuable format for the respondents. Even meeting once a month is helpful because it gives teachers a sense of camaraderie, a sense of belonging to a group of professionals who are united in their desire to teach as well as possible.

Among first-year teachers, particularly those who had just graduated from college, there is a feeling of being current in their field. Only two of the eight first-year teachers subscribe to professional journals or belong to professional associations in their subject matter. The first-year teachers are far more concerned with *how* questions; they are not interested in theories or "ideals," as one teacher called them. The beginning teachers without exception feel they needed more help in classroom management, administration of paperwork, and test construction.

Only one of the eight had asked a teacher for assistance. This teacher received help and called upon her colleague for assistance throughout the year. Isolation from peers is deemed, by both new and veteran teachers, rampant in their schools. To break down the isolation, the more experienced teachers in the sample deliberately formed networks and encouraged support from each other.

Most of the teachers are actively involved in the communities. And most had at least a master's degree but continue to take classes regularly. One 33-year-old female was taking tutorials in British literature through independent study. She met with a professor every two weeks to discuss the assigned readings. She likes such courses she said, because "I always want to keep up. This literature is delicious because it is so far removed from what I teach. This gives me a well-deserved break from the kids and the classroom." Of the other teachers, 90 percent had taken at least one class in the past two years.

The teachers in this sample tend to be extroverts who are also introspective. They are, as Wigginton said of best teachers, "their own harshest critics" because they care about narrowing the disparity between their goals and the actual classroom learning. Yet they persist and try to learn from their mistakes. Because they see problems as opportunities for learning and growth, they are not afraid to experiment, to take risks and try new learning formats and strategies. They are in touch with themselves, and they are open to students as well as to colleagues. They are able to see the best in other people, for they are accepting of themselves. They like themselves and what they do, believing they are engaged in critical work that will affect the future. Their teaching matters.

"I'll never forget my first day in the classroom. I was so nervous I thought I'd scream. As I walked toward my first class, an older teacher—she might have been in her early 60's came up to me. She asked me to step into her room for a second. 'Don't worry,' she told me. 'You'll do fine. And remember, Dearie, nobody will remember how you do this first day. Enjoy. And have a good time.' I did enjoy it. And I'm still teaching nearly 14 years later. She had good advice."

Robin W.
Physical Education Teacher

Finally, because quality teachers are always concerned about becoming more skilled, they welcome evaluation as a part of their ongoing professional assessment. Evaluation, as a process designed to make decisions about personal and professional learning, is acknowledged by these teachers as a key component of their teaching careers. Just as students are regularly evaluated, so too, say these teachers, should teaching be tested and examined. Such examination lends insight into the daily world of teaching. Ninety percent of the teachers praised the practice of videotaping the lesson. The videotape gave teachers a chance to study the tape closely and to watch critically the classroom dynamics. The tapes serve as the best critic because the teacher decides the nature of the change. Such learning is a very personal experience, providing teachers with the opportunity to watch, reflect, and learn at their own rate. Artistic teachers, who already know that teaching at times is a performance, particularly enjoy videotaping. It heightens their awareness about the drama of the classroom.

What Makes A Good Teacher?

Many teachers in the sample reported that they learned more since they started teaching than they had in all their previous years of schooling. The reason is simple: To teach a concept, skill, or theme, it is necessary to understand the subject fully. It is not enough to have a grasp of the ideas; it is also imperative that the teacher can break the idea or skill into its component parts. To teach means that one has learned. Knowing the topic is the *sine qua non* of teaching it. As time goes by, teachers report, they build a storehouse of ideas about how to teach, a repository filled with approaches to teaching a particular topic. About this time, when skills and techniques are really at a maximum, many teachers in the sample felt they became *A* teachers. Usually, acquiring such knowledge and skill took about ten years.

Teachers who can learn from their mistakes are more likely to be satisfied with their careers. Teachers reported, for instance, that they saw mistakes or problems as opportunities for learning. Most stated they deliberately experiment at least once a month with their classes. Having students teach the class and using reports by groups are considered two of the most successful activities.

Good teachers, in addition to being willing to take risks, constantly adapt new theories or models. They work on improving their repertoire of teaching strategies. Keeping current with new teaching techniques is what motivates many teachers to return to graduate school, either to obtain course work in their subject matter or to take courses in pedagogy. The result was a fresh generation of ideas for their classrooms. Several teachers indicated that the friendships formed in the college classes often grew. Some teachers continued to meet, informally, when the class finished. In one graduate course in English education dealing with readers' responses to literary texts, the eight teachers and the instructor continued to meet for a year after the course was finished.

> ***"On my bad days I feel like the character in 'The Myth of Sisyphus.' Do you know the story? Sisyphus, in this story by Camus, is condemned to push a heavy rock up a high hill. As soon as he gets to the top, the stone rolls back down. He must begin again. Camus says that because Sisyphus recognized the absurdity of the situation, he gains his dignity. He is free of illusion.***
>
> ***Well, sometimes I feel just like Sisyphus: I'm pushing a large rock up an endless hill. I get very tired. Yet it's funny. I know that I'll feel quite differently on another day. So I, like Sisyphus, go on."***
>
> ***Lori P.***
> ***English Teacher***

Good teachers understand the cultural values of their school. They recognize and try to abide by the norms and values in the school. They actively participate during rallies and often get involved in class fads such as "Hat Day" or "Western Day." These teachers are not afraid to be themselves with their students. They enter as much as they can into the students' world of customs and games. Because these teachers know that teaching does not occur only in the classroom, they welcome opportunities to interact with students outside the classroom. This interaction carries over into the classroom where the best teachers model what they teach. They act as role models without patronizing their students or being condescending to them. They are themselves. Students learn that teachers are people, too.

Finally, good teachers do not leave their work at school. Planning, grading papers, and creating tests and quizzes are often done at home. After school and on weekends, these teachers prepare for teaching. Working on individual lesson plans for students and devising group activities, the best teachers give of themselves outside the classroom. Teachers often use time away from school to think about teaching, to find new ideas, and to relate what they see to their classrooms. It can be an exhausting profession with inimitable joy.

Growth States

Teachers vary in their readiness for change. Some teachers are always eager for change. They are "omnivores" who "use every available aspect of the formal and informal systems available to them. Their lives are rich with books, the performing arts, travel, sports, university courses, and the offerings of teacher centers and districts. They have found professional colleagues with whom they are close and can exchange ideas" (Joyce, Hersh, and McKibbin, 1983, p. 163). At the other extreme are the "withdrawn" who "require a great deal of energy from outside if they are to become involved. They may push away activity in one or more domains avoiding the formal system where they can, engaging in few activities that they generate themselves, and participating rarely in informal interaction at work" (Joyce, Hersh, and McKibbin, 1983, p. 167). Most teachers fall somewhere between the two extremes, though artistic teachers often tend to be omnivores.

All together, Joyce and his colleagues identified five major categories of growth states: Omnivores, Active Consumers, Passive Consumers, Entrenched, and Withdrawn. Teachers in these various states will differ in their openness to change or to innovation. Malcolm Knowles (1978) notes that all adults have "peak learning experiences" when they are open to MAXIMAL learning (p. 31). During these times adults are most acquisitive of new knowledge, especially if it draws upon previous knowledge and is "life-centered" (Knowles, 1978, p. 31). Even when engaged in implementing a new curriculum or text, teachers tend to be at various stages of readiness. They experience different needs, have personal concerns about self-adequacy, and wonder about how the changes will influence students. (Reflections C and D provide schema for assessing levels of readiness and attitudes toward innovation.)

Because peak learning experiences tend to come in cycles, teachers should become self-directed in their learning. Opportunities to learn the new material, practice it, and talk about it with colleagues are essential if teachers are to succeed. Inservice programs that do not touch the teachers' personal lives and concerns—that are not linked directly to their needs and interests and are not based on their experiences—will not be successful. Individual growth cannot be forced, but it can be nurtured.

"Some days I feel like a tightrope walker, out here working without a net, trying to balance the system's needs with my students' with my own. Some days the pole is not long enough, the rope too slick, my balance lost. Some days I fall. Hard.

There really is no net in teaching. Not if you want to do a good job. But I continue to try to make it from one end of the rope to the other. The balance is precarious. Some days I make it. The students and I have our gains. We make it across. Then I feel good."

Randy A.
Science Teacher

Some teachers will get involved in staff development because they love learning. Others will join inservice activities because of friends. Still others will hold back to assess the results. The latter teachers may need a personal invitation to get involved. Artistic teachers will tend to become involved quickly; their enthusiasm is often contagious. Within the different levels of readiness, there should be time and opportunity for all teachers to become participants.

Teachers' growth states are influenced by colleagues and students. Individual opportunities, chances to be self-directed in learning new ideas or solving problems, will encourage faculties to take part. Especially in buildings where growth is valued, teachers tend to be more enthusiastic and more willing to attempt change. If teachers are provided with opportunities to learn, they will continue to grow. The personal challenge of achieving a new skill or learning new content is the most powerful motivator for most teachers. Teachers learn because they want to be excellent. Pride in being an effective teacher impels artistic teachers.

Coda

Teaching, like learning, is an intense experience. At times teaching can seem overwhelming because of the responsibilities and challenges involved. At other times teaching is a delight that touches the heart. Both children and adults experience peak learning moments when everything comes together to form a new whole, a new insight that means learning has occurred.

Because teaching involves a strong commitment and huge amounts of enthusiasm, teachers need to find opportunities for growth, for learning, and for reflection. The daily rhythm of teaching can lure some teachers into becoming content with their teaching. At other times, however, they will be deeply involved in learning new things. Chances to practice the new learning are as important as the learning itself. Implementing the change in a classroom requires patience. Artistic teachers find the time for new learning, and they readily use all the available opportunities to grow. That commitment is one of the reasons such teachers are artists.

Reflection C
Typical Stages of Concern About an Innovation*

Gene E. Hall and his colleagues (1973) have outlined the various stages of concern teachers experience when adopting an innovation. The chart below depicts these steps, ranging from awareness to refocusing. Each of these stages requires careful attention to ensure that an innovation is used in the classroom.

Stages of Concern	Expressions of Concern
6 Refocusing	I have some ideas about something that would work even better.
5 Collaboration	I am concerned about relating what I am doing to what other instructors are doing.
4 Consequence	How is my use affecting kids?
3 Management	I seem to be spending all my time in getting material ready.
2 Personal	How will using it affect me?
1 Informational	I would like to know more about it.
0 Awareness	I am not concerned about it (the innovation).

*Adapted from *A Developmental Conceptualization of the Adoption Process Within Educational Institutions* by Gene E. Hall, R. C. Wallace, Jr., and W. A. Dossett. Austin: Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, The University of Texas, 1973. Reprinted by permission of Gene E. Hall.

Reflection D
Typical Behaviors in Using an Innovation*

Gene E. Hall and others (1973) have described the behaviors that teachers typically exhibit when using an innovation—from orientation to renewal. The corresponding indices of behavior are shown below.

	Level of Use	Behavioral Indices of Level
VI	Renewal	The user is seeking more effective alternatives to the established use of the innovation.
V	Integration	The user is making deliberate efforts to coordinate with others in using the innovation.
IVB	Refinement	The user is making changes to increase outcomes.
IVA	Routine	The user is making few or no changes and has an established pattern of use.
III	Mechanical use	The user is using the innovation in a poorly coordinated manner and is making user-oriented changes.
II	Preparation	The user is preparing to use the innovation.
I	Orientation	The user is seeking out information about the innovation.
O	Nonuse	No action is being taken with respect to the innovation.

*Adapted from *A Developmental Conceptualization of the Adoption Process Within Educational Institutions* by Gene E. Hall, R. C. Wallace, Jr., and W. A. Dossett. Austin: Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, The University of Texas, 1973. Reprinted by permission of Gene E. Hall.

For a more recent discussion of this research, see Gene E. Hall and Shirley M. Hord, *Change In Schools: Facilitating the Process*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987.

Chapter Four:

School Culture: The Context for Growth

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An organization's norms and values affect the people who work in it. A school with a strong sense of purpose—where students and teachers share common goals and attitudes about learning—promotes, explicitly and implicitly, the importance of learning. Organizations, whether schools or businesses, can encourage or discourage, depending on the ideals and values that are espoused. Among the 12 characteristics of good schools identified by Jack Frymier and his associates (1984), there was a feeling on the part of faculty and staff that their work was "challenging and satisfying"; and there was a commitment on the part of the faculty to seek "continuing renewal and improvement" (Frymier and others, 1984, p. 221). Such schools create an environment that enhances personal and professional growth.

Similarly, a school's culture can promote school improvement as a continuing process, a way of life. Jon Saphier and Matthew King have identified 12 "cultural norms" (Reflection E) that actively reinforce students' and teachers' learning. These schools establish the importance of both personal and professional excellence. Student achievement is directly linked to the professional growth of teachers. "The school must be a place for the growth and recognition of the teacher if it is to be a place that provides for the growth and recognition of the student" (Eisner, 1983, p. 55).

"Several of my friends quit teaching. They couldn't take the pressures, I guess. At least they thought they couldn't. Some of my friends, at least two I keep in contact with, have become very successful in business. One told me, 'I really like the money and all. But I miss the kids.' I'd like to make more money, of course. Who wouldn't? But it's not really the money. It's the chance to make a difference with kids. Help them learn and grow. Making money is fine. But I need to help people. That's what motivates me. It sure would be nice to get a better economic reward while I'm doing it. But it's a choice I can live with."

Mary Kay S.
Social Studies Teacher

In her study of high schools, Sara Lawrence Lightfoot (1983) notes that "the search for 'good' schools is elusive and disappointing if by goodness we mean something close to perfection. These portraits of good schools reveal imperfections, uncertainties, and vulnerabilities in each of them" (p. 309). She contends, in fact, that one of the hallmarks of good schools is a willingness to acknowledge the imperfections and to search for ways to improve.

Schools and teachers are not static and unchanging. Neither are they perfect. They are in a state of flux. Lightfoot's view of good schools, which anticipate "change, conflict, and imperfection," could be applied to good teachers as well. Schools and teachers—no matter how excellent—have flaws. What distinguishes good schools from mediocre schools is what Lightfoot calls "conscious change" (p. 312). Good schools welcome growth. Just as artistic teachers recognize that they are in a state of becoming, the culture or ethos of good schools is oriented toward improvement. Personal and institutional self-examination are necessary if excellence is to be achieved.

Between the ideal and the real, there is always a disparity. Yet Lightfoot's definition of good schools as confronting their imperfections—attempting to narrow the gap between the real and ideal—provides insight into the nature of change itself. Denying imperfections does not change them. But by confronting what needs to be changed, "one moves closer and closer to the institutional supports of good education" (Lightfoot, 1983, p. 311). The challenge of moving toward any ideal in education requires a commitment to strive, in spite of imperfection and setbacks, to do the best one can. Such ideals provide a goal that may never be attained, but the attempt sustains growth.

Visions of excellence provide direction and a sense of possibility. Without these hopes and the belief that improvement is possible, there is little point in trying. Schools need to create among faculty and students a culture of excellence that unifies the school through visions of what might be achieved by increased learning and fine teaching. These school environments encourage pupils and teachers to strive for personal and intellectual growth. Even the best teachers need such environments if they are to continue to teach in an excellent fashion.

> In a very real sense we become the things we do. We take on the attributes of the activities we engage in . . . . States of growth are self-perpetuating. The more active consumers of the environment receive great satisfaction from their behavior which tends to draw them into more and more active roles in the re-creation of their own lives. Hence, the adventuresome intellectual and spiritual qualities they bring to their teaching and, ultimately, to their students (Joyce, Hersh, McKibbin, 1983, p. 173).

Teachers who are nurtured in such environments reflect their love of learning in their dealings with students. They become models of excellence which students can admire and emulate. The culture, or ethos, of a school can enhance teaching and learning, or it can destroy the desire to teach and to learn, and eventually kill the belief that teaching and learning are even worthwhile. We do, indeed, become the things we do. This is why an openness to change and a willingness to experiment are so important. Attitudes about the nature of personal and professional growth directly influence people's behaviors.

Attitudes Toward Change

Often the hardest part of change is believing that change is possible. Many people refuse to believe that they can change. As long as they believe they cannot change, they won't (Langer, 1983). Fundamentally, change involves emotions and attitudes. Emotions and attitudes, in fact, often prohibit change. They become self-fulfilling prophecies. This situation is reminiscent of the classic statement by Descartes: "I think; therefore, I am." This assertion, if made with self-doubt, becomes: "I can't; therefore, I won't."

The first step, then, in betterment is believing that change is possible; that people, irrespective of age or temperament, can—if they desire—improve in fundamental ways. These changes, though incremental, can result in extensive new behaviors and attitudes. At the core of these new behaviors is a willingness to try—a recognition that the alteration is worth the effort.

To believe in growth may be difficult for many people who see themselves as controlled by forces outside themselves, or who see themselves as hopeless, passive individuals without the ability to alter their lives. Robert L. Woolfolk and Frank C. Richardson (1978) point out that such types of beliefs are often what prohibit people from growing:

> It may be helpful to begin with a few words about the nature of beliefs. Mistaken ideas about the nature of beliefs are often problems in their own right. We commonly think that the most important thing about beliefs is whether they are true or false. On the contrary, the most important thing about beliefs is not their truthfulness, but their usefulness. It can be enormously helpful to you to evaluate beliefs in terms of their usefulness rather than their truth or falsehood (p. 92).

Woolfolk and Richardson recommend that beliefs be evaluated as to how they help or impede a person's life. "Beliefs are more or less fruitful guides to action that need to be evaluated based on their results. They are nothing more or less than either effective or ineffective tools for living. The pertinent question is, do your beliefs maximize self-respect and pleasure in living? Little else matters" (pp. 92-93). Beliefs, in this view, are instruments that provide productive tools for life. If beliefs are interfering with what a person would like to do, he or she must reexamine the beliefs to see how they are inhibiting achievement.

"I used to go home at night and my head felt crushed. Too much tension. Too many demands. Too many students. I felt totally drained. I was stressed out. Now, however, with aerobics and an exercise program, I'm handling the stress better. My reaction to it is different. There are still days when I'm worn out. But I'm taking things less seriously. I feel more in control, and I think I'm teaching better. A lot of that tension is in your head. It's how you respond to the situation, not the situation itself. That's a hard lesson to learn."

Julia S.
Language Arts Teacher

Opportunities and Challenges of Growth

What are the dynamics that encourage people to improve? What are the ingredients that make people ready to change? Change is a problematic process. The heavy smoker who one day decides never to smoke again, the sedentary middle-aged man who decides to take up jogging and a year later is running in marathons, the young girl who seeks help because she is afraid to leave her room—these examples stand in stark contrast to the four-pack-a-day smoker who puffs merrily away, the million men who die each year of heart attacks, and the withdrawn, frightened young people who are afraid to seek help. Change is a process, a journey rather than a destination. Change requires a willingness to acknowledge things about oneself that deserve to be altered.

Paradoxically, although many people fear change, change is the essence of life. People are moving—psychologically, cognitively, and emotionally—throughout their lives (O'Connell, Whitmore, and O'Connell, 1985). Adults, it has been discovered in recent years, undergo far more transformations than researchers previously understood: Authors such as Gail Sheehy in *Passages* and Daniel Levinson in *Seasons of a Man's Life* have described major shifts in outlook and interest that adults undergo. These changes, albeit painful, can be enriching experiences that enable individuals to discover new facets of themselves, new strengths, and new complexities in their lives. People who can get in touch with their feelings of dissonance can transcend their limitations and enter a new period of self-fulfillment. Such passages form a mosaic, each of the pieces a distinct hue or coloration, that contributes to the creation of the self. (Reflection F contains a self-description checklist to assess personal well-being.)

Sometimes the conditions of change stem from external forces—a new promotion, a business opportunity, a fellowship—and sometimes the changes come from internal discoveries: I want to be in better shape physically, or I want to be a better parent, or I do need to learn computer skills. Whether the stimulus is external or internal, one of the first responses is to deny the need for change. Through denial, individuals refuse to acknowledge the opportunity for growth. Instead, they close their eyes to the opportunity or refuse to face the need for change. Usually people will not risk change until there is a clear need, or the lack of change creates too much unhappiness for the individual. Sometimes it is easier to change than to not change. More likely, however, perceiving the need for change does not occur rapidly or overnight. Change, and the recognition of it, is incremental and piecemeal. Realization of the need for change dawns slowly on the individual.

> ***"The hardest thing for me was going in that classroom door. I felt the tension in the pit of my stomach. Especially with my terrorist class. I dreaded it. The only way I got through it was to force myself to walk in the door. Even that got nearly impossible. Finally, I went to see a therapist. My best friend suggested it. The therapist was great. She made me feel a lot better about who I was, so I started feeling better about what I was doing. I still dread walking in sometimes. But it's better. I'm learning how to face the anxiety without letting it control me."***
>
> *Catherine T.*
> *History Teacher*

Nearly 40 years ago, in an early study of the elements of change, Kurt Lewin (1948) described change as a three-part process: *unfreezing, moving forward,* and *refreezing.* The metaphor is apt, for it captures the disequilibrium people experience during change. During the *moving forward* phase, the changes occur. Habits are broken or begun; the changes are internalized and made part of oneself. Then, in the final phase, *refreezing,* the individual refines the skills and uses them in daily life.

More recently, the three parts of Lewin's model have been expressed in a variety of ways. Perhaps the clearest way to examine the process is to consider *awareness, goal setting,* and *practice.* The first step occurs when the person has an insight that change is necessary. Until this awareness exists—when the person is able to assess current strengths and limitations—there is no possibility of change.

Once cognizance is achieved, and the person accepts the need for change, he or she can enter the *goal-setting* phase where the person identifies the principal areas where change is needed. At this point, it is necessary to determine, however minimally, a plan for accomplishing the changes. During the early part of this phase, keeping one's resolve is not difficult. Whether it is doing 20 push-ups in the morning or quitting cigarettes, the easiest period occurs in the beginning. Sometimes within the first several weeks of the new program, a crisis will arise. The person will doubt that he can continue to change. He may backslide by skipping a day's exercise; she may have one cigarette. But these instances can be surmounted, especially if the person does not succumb to "all or nothing" thinking (Burns, 1980). In this type of thinking, the person gives up because of one mistake or failure. Confusing this instance with the whole, the person focuses on the one setback. Such thinking and other similar distortions need to be overcome if change is to continue. (A list of cognitive distortions can be found in Reflection G.)

Having surmounted the self-doubt and uncertainty, and now being convinced that change is possible, the individual enters the third phase—*practice*—where the skill or habit or knowledge is practiced and refined. A daily plan can assist the person in practicing the skills enough to assure that the goal continues to be fulfilled. Setbacks or temptations to backslide are a normal part of this process. Some cigarette smokers who have stopped for 25 years, for example, still occasionally think about a cigarette. And even great athletes have bad days when practice is horrible, and it is difficult to continue. Perseverance is required.

A Process of Personal Learning

Based upon their work with principals who wanted to change their leadership styles, Barry Jentz and Joan Wofford (1979) have found that five components are necessary to encourage change. These five steps could prove useful to teachers as well as to principals because the categories constitute a framework for learning:

> *Starting Points* Acknowledging discrepancies between intentions, actions, and consequences
>
> *Examining Practice* Confronting assumptions about self and others
>
> *Making New Sense* Entertaining the possibility of alternative assumptions about self and others
>
> *Translating* Attempting, in a protected setting, to invent and practice new behavior based on the new assumptions
>
> *Taking New Action* Using one's position as a leader, informed by new assumptions, to create the conditions for learning (Jentz and Wofford, 1979, pp. 6-7).

When people recognize discrepancies between intent and action—*Starting Points*—they can respond through "four general categories of response": "One response is to *fight*. Another response is *flight*. A third response is to become *indifferent*, to stop caring. A fourth response is to *learn*" (p. 7). If people are willing to try to learn, the process requires that they examine their assumptions, particularly looking at how these assumptions govern their actions.

Jentz and Wofford, like others who have studied the personal change process, acknowledge the uneasiness and disequilibrium that people experience with new learning. Their description of the process provides insight into how growth occurs:

> The specific activities which frequently occur as one examines practice include: slowing down the action, isolating a single action, inquiring systematically into the thoughts and feelings that accompany that action, confronting the unacknowledged feelings, coming fully to feel those feelings, and searching for the assumptions which give rise to the thoughts and feelings (p. 8).

Examining Practice—looking at one's assumptions—is a difficult process. It requires people to peer inward and to confront feelings. Perhaps change is as difficult as it is because people have a hard time facing their feelings. Yet this step is essential. Reflection takes time. Group support will encourage people to take this step.

> ***"I always like working with the new teachers. They remind me of when I started. They have so much enthusiasm and so many ideas. I learn new content sometimes. And I also watch for how they lead the class. It's a fine balance, at first, between the content and the management. I like to help out with classroom tips. It's a nice trade-off: I refine my content and help the new kids on the block with management ideas. I enjoy it."***
>
> *Jon W.*
> *Eighth Grade Teacher*

During the third step, *Making New Sense*, educators are encouraged to "consciously" keep old assumptions or to select alternative assumptions. According to Jentz and Wofford, this step provides a sense of alternatives, a recognition that new perspectives are possible. "Release and hope come with the realization that one need not be bound forever by what one thought were immutable truths about oneself and others. Different interpretations are possible. New sense can be made of old facts" (p. 8).

In the fourth part of the process, *Translating*, the learner enters "an organized phase of learning in which the learner attempts, in a protected setting, to test out new assumptions by creating new actions" (p. 9). As with any new kind of learning, teachers in this phase require time to practice and refine skills. Change, in this view, requires an ongoing commitment.

> The importance of this phase is based on three central premises: That insights do not easily translate into changed behavior because of a continuing tension between old and new patterns; that improved interactional skills cannot be learned alone, yet leaders tend to rely on learning alone; and, that new behavior based on new assumptions often conflicts with the expectations other people have of appropriate leadership behavior (p. 9).

During the final phase, *Taking New Action*, educators' actions begin to have consequences for others. By this time in the change process, learners have incorporated the new skills into their personal style. For a principal, this may mean better skill in working with the staff. For a teacher, this may mean a greater ability to individualize instruction or to be more proficient in leading group work. Because they have learned to be more effective, they are better able to help others learn. "A leader who can take personal responsibility for both old and new assumptions, is thereby enabled to reach out to other people by attempting to imagine their assumptions, and to structure interactions in ways that move toward mutual exchanges" (Jentz and Wofford, p. 9).

Through this process, learners are able to use new techniques, but, more important, have "new ways of interpreting personal and interpersonal events (Jentz and Wofford, p. 177).* As their self-esteem increased, they became more open and more giving with others. The internal changes helped the principals become more responsive leaders. The changes in interpersonal actions, the personal learning and growth, made the principals feel better about themselves. They, in turn, reflected these attitudes as they worked with their staffs, thus enabling staff members to feel better and to act more successfully. Those individuals who took responsibility for their personal growth were able to offer assistance to others at their schools.

Organizational Designs for Success

Change is never easy, never fast. Most change occurs slowly as new learning is practiced and polished. Because change is incremental and takes time, individuals need opportunities to apply their new learning and receive constructive criticism about how their new skills are progressing. Above all, if change is to be accomplished, people need opportunities to take risks. Invariably, people will make mistakes, because they are experimenting with new behaviors. An environment that celebrates taking risks and making mistakes enables people to experiment with their personal growth. Innovative companies are establishing such environments.

In their book *In Search of Excellence* (1982), Thomas Peters and Robert Waterman tell the story of a company that celebrates mistakes to stimulate innovation. Ore-Ida, a food manufacturer, stresses risk-taking and new learning in its research and development activities. The company "has carefully defined what it calls the 'perfect failure,' and has arranged to shoot off a cannon in celebration every time one occurs":

> The perfect failure concept arises from the simple recognition that all research and development is inherently risky, that the only way to succeed at all is through lots of tries, that management's primary objective should be to induce lots of tries, and that a good try that results in some learning is to be celebrated even when it fails. As a by-product, they legitimize and even create positive feelings around calling a quick halt to an obviously failing proposition, rather than letting it drag on with resulting higher cost in funds and eventual demoralization (p. 69).

Experimentation is not easy in businesses or in schools. But a conducive climate can be created that celebrates people who are doing the best they can. Even "perfect failures" are important as people strive for excellence.

*From *Leadership and Learning: Personal Change in a Professional Setting* by Barry C. Jentz and Joan W. Wofford, pp. 6-9; 177. Copyright © 1979 by Leadership and Learning, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the McGraw-Hill Book Company.

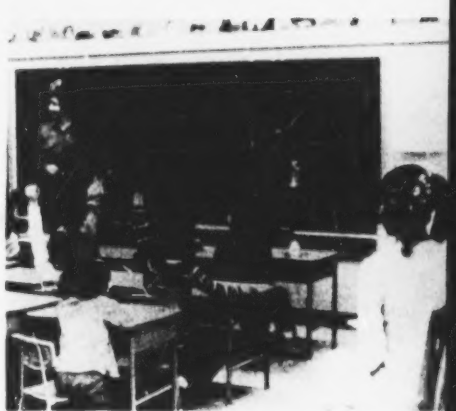
There is an old adage that "nothing succeeds like success," and the most innovative American companies impel people to take risks and to experiment. Through such ventures, new discoveries and new learning occur. Peters and Waterman found that the most innovative companies create environments that are designed for success. A large part of this design consists of letting people be the winners they want to be:

> The message that comes through so poignantly in the studies we reviewed is that we like to think of ourselves as winners. The lesson that the excellent companies have to teach is that there is no reason why we can't design systems that continually reinforce this notion; most of their people are made to feel they are winners. Their populations are distributed around the normal curve, just like every other large population, but the difference is that their systems reinforce degrees of winning rather than degrees of losing. Their people by and large make their targets and quotas, because the targets and quotas are set (often by the people themselves) to allow that to happen (Peters and Waterman, p. 57).

Schools can learn from the philosophy of such companies, which assume that people want to be excellent. These companies lead people "to believe they are successful. They learn that they can get things done because of skill, and, most important, they are likely to try again" (p. 58). A climate or culture that enables people to use their skills and take risks will produce results. If people are afraid to venture, they will show few gains.

Schools can be designed for success. A structure that emphasizes personal growth as part of each professional's responsibilities indicates that continuing education is important. Bruce Joyce, Richard Hersh, and Michael McKibbin (1983) have described such schools as "learning laboratories" which stress a "growth-oriented ecology" that has three purposes:

1. To enrich the lives of teachers and administrators so that they continuously expand their general education, their emotional range, and their understanding of children.
2. To generate continuous efforts to improve schools. School faculties, administrators, and community members need to work together to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to bring those improvements into existence.
3. To create conditions which enable professional skill development to be continuous. Every teacher and administrator needs to be a student of learning and teaching and to engage in a continuous process of experimentation with their behavior and that of their students. They need to study alternative approaches to schooling and teaching, to select ones which will expand their capabilities, and to acquire the understanding and skills necessary to make fresh alternatives a part of their ongoing professional repertoire (pp. 149-150).*



*From *The Structure of School Improvement* by Bruce R. Joyce, Richard H. Hersh, and Michael McKibbin, pp. 149-150; 163, 167, and 173. Copyright © 1983 by Longman, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Longman, Inc.

The ideas of continuity and of working together in an environment that fosters experimentation in teaching and learning capture the essence of personal and professional change. The commitment to grow and to examine new alternatives ensures that schools are dynamic places engaged in an ongoing process of improvement.

The Individual and the Team

The best companies and the best schools share a common orientation. They have broad, general goals that are understood by people who work in the organization; at the same time, they encourage people to define how they, as individuals, will contribute to these goals. Within a climate or culture that actuates excellence, people take personal responsibility for accomplishing tasks. Whether they are engaged in managing or teaching, individuals believe their actions have important consequences for success. Because they believe they have personal control over their destinies, productive people exhibit commitment and ownership. Equally important as controlling one's destiny is the feeling that one is part of something larger—one's work is linked to larger organizational concerns. Both the individual as a person and the individual as part of a larger team effort are important.

Peters and Waterman (1982) note how best-run companies have established environments where the individual is aligned with the company: "These companies provide the opportunity to stick out [as an individual contributor], yet combine it with a philosophy and system of beliefs . . . that provide the transcending meaning—a wonderful combination" (p. 81). Individuals need to be part of a winning team. An illustration of the individual and the team combination is found in the story of IBM's recognition of employees:

> . . . the manager of a 100-person sales branch rented the Meadowlands Stadium (New Jersey) for the evening. After work, his salesmen ran onto the stadium's field through the players' tunnel. As each emerged, the electronic scoreboard beamed his name to the assembled crowd. Executives from corporate headquarters, employees from other offices, and family and friends were present, cheering loudly.
>
> The company is IBM. With one act (most nonexcellent companies would write it off as too corny, too lavish, or both), IBM simultaneously reaffirmed its heroic dimension (satisfying the individual's need to be a part of something great) and its concern for individual self-expression (the need to stick out) (p. xxii).*

The link between the individual's efforts and the team's is based on a common *culture*; that is, a set of values, goals, and aspirations that provide meaning and direction as the individual contributes to the organization. This emphasis is based on the work of Ernest Becker who, according to Peters and Waterman, formulated the importance of the individual as part of a larger team. Becker "argues that man is driven by an essential 'dualism'; he needs both to be a part of something and to stick out. He needs at one and the same time to be a conforming member of a winning team and to be a star in his own right" (Peters and Waterman, p. xxi). Through this combination, people strive toward excellence and take responsibility to assure organizational success.

*From *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies* by Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr., pp. xxii, 37, and 69. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

> ***"I really enjoy going into other classrooms, seeing how other folks do things. Watching excellent teachers helps me. Then I like to talk with the teachers and share materials. Visits where I watch the way a class plays out. Even when a class doesn't work is a good learning experience for me. It helps me appreciate the successes I have."***
>
> *Edward N.*
> *Sixth Grade Teacher*

Being part of a larger team effort works in innovative companies. The team approach can also work in schools. Schools with a vision of excellence that encourages personal and professional growth are likely to produce change if they allow individual teachers to work in common with other skilled professionals.

The Refinement of Teaching Skills

To acquire new skills, teachers, like other individuals, need the opportunity to acquire information, practice the desired skills, and reflect upon how well they are performing the new learning. Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers (1980) have identified five major components of training:

(1) Presentation of theory or description of skill or strategy;

(2) Modeling or demonstration of skills or models of teaching;

(3) Practice in simulated and classroom settings;

(4) Structured and open-ended feedback (provision of information about performance);

(5) Coaching for application (hands-on, in-classroom assistance with the transfer of skills and strategies to the classroom) (p. 380).*

Without attention to the last element, "coaching for application," there is little likelihood that teachers will be able to transfer the new knowledge and skills into their classrooms. Because new skills require time for refinement, teachers—without time to practice—tend to fall back upon existing behaviors. The coaching element enables teachers to move beyond their previous proficiencies and to develop enough confidence that they can successfully introduce the new ideas to their classes. These new skills, with coaching, then have a far greater chance of becoming part of the teachers' repertoire of classroom behaviors (Joyce and Showers, 1980, pp. 379-380).

> ***"I sometimes think that teaching is the loneliest profession there is. You're surrounded by kids all day long, juggling their needs, making adjustments to fit different learning styles, and at the end of the day you're just exhausted. That's why I liked student teaching so much—I had a chance to share my experiences with my friends. Comparing notes, commiserating. As frustrating as I found student teaching, I had at least a chance to talk over my troubles. But I don't have those chances now. Maybe I should find colleagues who are experiencing the same kinds of frustration. I might feel less alone. But there doesn't seem to be time. I'm too busy preparing for the next day."***
>
> *Hazel C.*
> *Second Grade Teacher*

*From Bruce R. Joyce and Beverly Showers, "Improving Inservice Training: The Message of Research," *Educational Leadership*, 1980, 37(5), p. 380. Reprinted with permission of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Copyright © 1980 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.

Recent work by Showers (1985) suggests that coaching has at least three purposes:

> The first is to build communities of teachers who continuously engage in the study of their craft. Coaching is as much a communal activity, a relationship among seeking professionals, as it is the exercise of a set of skills and a vital component of training.
>
> Second, coaching develops the shared language and set of common understanding necessary for the collegial study of new knowledge and skills. Especially important is the agreement that curriculum and instruction need constant improvement and that expanding our repertoire of teaching skills requires hard work, in which the help of our colleagues is indispensable.
>
> Third, coaching provides a structure for the follow up to training that is essential for acquiring new teaching skills and strategies . . . . Coaching appears to be most appropriate when teachers wish to acquire unique configurations of teaching patterns and to master strategies that require new ways of thinking about learning objectives and the processes by which students achieve them (pp. 43-44).*

The school in which coaching occurs can focus increased attention on growth. The individual is part of a larger school effort that promotes a vision of excellence that is ongoing and is continually being refined.

The nature of the coaching process encourages teachers to be more reflective about their growth. Over time, the "coaching conferences take on the character of collaborative problem-solving sessions," and team members "begin to operate in a spirit of exploration" (Showers, p. 44). The process of improvement is built into the team's school. "By building permanent structures for collegial relationships, schools organize themselves for improvement in multiple areas (Showers, p. 44). Teams within schools have the capability to take responsibility for their own self-renewal.

"A couple of years ago I thought of leaving. I was tired, 'burned out,' as they say. But I went back to school. Got away for a year. It gave me a new attitude. I liked the course work and the time to think over where I want to go with my life. One of the best things that year off did, it made me realize how much I enjoy teaching. I'm going to stay in it for awhile because I want to use all the ideas I've learned."

Martha W.
Fourth Grade Teacher

*From Beverly Showers, "Teachers Coaching Teachers," *Educational Leadership*, 1985, 42(7), pp. 43-44. Reprinted with permission of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Copyright © 1985 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.

Such schools might come to resemble what John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene (1985) have described in *Re-inventing the Corporation.* "The most distinguishing characteristic of the re-invented corporation is that it is a place where employees experience growth":

> What does a nourishing growth environment actually look like? To summarize, it is a workplace where people are talking about their work, exchanging ideas, where top managers and newcomers know one another and often work together, where people are learning at company-sponsored events like lectures and concerts and through travel for specialized training or stimulation.
>
> It is a workplace where people are working on what interests them most, although it also means stretching to learn new tasks related to your job or working in new departments to get a feel for the company as a whole.
>
> We must re-invent the corporation into a place where people come to grow, instead of expecting people to satisfy the need for growth in their off-hours (pp. 51-52).*

Schools or corporations that acknowledge the importance of growth and provide opportunities for employees to participate will elicit higher performance. A culture that promotes growth among adults will, in turn, encourage new learning among students.

Coda

Schools, like other organizations, have a climate or culture that endorses certain values and norms. Successful schools promote the idea that learning and teaching are important. Conditions in schools can encourage change and growth; persistence, a willingness to take risks and experiment with new learning, and opportunities to reflect on successes as well as mistakes are essential ingredients of schools that nurture growth.

Such schools engender feelings of teamwork, a sense that students and teachers alike are engaged in important tasks of learning. Schools that stress the importance of personal and professional growth encourage individual teachers to achieve artistry, and they also provide opportunities for skilled professionals to share techniques and become even better.

*From *Re-inventing the Corporation: Transforming Your Job and Your Company for the New Information Society* by John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene, pp. 51-52. Copyright © 1985 by Megatrends Ltd. Reprinted by permission of Warner Books, Inc.

Reflection E
A School's Growth Environment

Jon Saphier and Matthew King have identified 12 cultural norms that affect school improvement. Without these norms a school culture cannot encourage personal and professional growth.

Consider the degree to which these norms are reflected in your school. How can you initiate changes that will strengthen these cultural values as you work toward school improvement?

The Cultural Norms that Affect School Improvement*

_____ 1. Collegiality

_____ 2. Experimentation

_____ 3. High expectations

_____ 4. Trust and confidence

_____ 5. Tangible support

_____ 6. Reaching out to the knowledge bases

_____ 7. Appreciation and recognition

_____ 8. Caring, celebration, and humor

_____ 9. Involvement in decision making

_____ 10. Protection of what's important

_____ 11. Traditions

_____ 12. Honest, open communication

*Jon Saphier and Matthew King, "Good Seeds Grow in Strong Cultures," *Educational Leadership* 42 (March 1985), p. 67. Reprinted with the permission of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Copyright © 1985 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.

Reflection F
Self-Description Checklist

In her book *Pathfinders* (1981), Gail Sheehy interviewed hundreds of people from all strata of society—blue-collar, white-collar, and professional groups—about their lives. She discovered that how people described themselves was directly related to their overall sense of well-being. She concluded that there were ten ingredients that were important to her respondents.

Listed below are the ten self-descriptions Sheehy identified. You may find it useful to compare yourself with the self-descriptions of those Sheehy interviewed. The descriptions are listed in their order of importance to the respondents. The first five self-descriptions were most often mentioned; the last five were mentioned less frequently:*

_____ 1. My life has meaning and direction.

_____ 2. I have experienced one or more important transitions in my adult years, and I have handled these transitions in an unusual, personal, or creative way.

_____ 3. I rarely feel cheated or disappointed by life.

_____ 4. I have already attained several of the long-term goals that are important to me.

_____ 5. I am pleased with my personal growth and development.

_____ 6. I am in love; my partner and I love mutually.

_____ 7. I have many friends.

_____ 8. I am a cheerful person.

_____ 9. I am not thin-skinned or sensitive to criticism.

_____ 10. I have no major fears.

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Reflection G
Checklist of Cognitive Distortions

In his book *Feeling Good*, David D. Burns, M.D., develops the thesis that people tend to change their moods through their thoughts. He identifies ten "cognitive distortions" that people make. When people recognize these distortions and begin to avoid them, they start to feel better about themselves and their lives.

You may find the checklist below, which is adapted from Burns' work, a useful self-assessment instrument.

Types of Thinking That Cause Depression*

1. ALL-OR-NOTHING THINKING: You see things in black-and-white categories. If your performance falls short of perfect, you see yourself as a total failure.

2. OVERGENERALIZATION: You see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat.

3. MENTAL FILTER: You pick out a single negative detail and dwell on it exclusively so that your vision of all reality becomes darkened, like the drop of ink that discolors the entire beaker of water.

4. DISQUALIFYING THE POSITIVE: You reject positive experiences by insisting they "don't count" for some reason or other. . . .

5. JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS: You make a negative interpretation even though there are no definite facts that convincingly support your conclusion. . . .

6. MAGNIFICATION (CATASTROPHIZING) OR MINIMIZATION: You exaggerate the importance of things (such as your goof-up or someone else's achievement), or you inappropriately shrink things until they appear tiny. . . .

7. EMOTIONAL REASONING: You assume that your negative emotions necessarily reflect the way things really are. . . .

8. SHOULD STATEMENTS: You try to motivate yourself with shoulds and shouldn'ts, as if you had to be whipped and punished before you could be expected to do anything. "Musts" and "oughts" are also offenders.

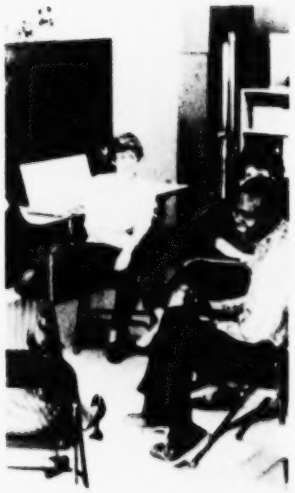
9. LABELING AND MISLABELING: This is an extreme form of over-generalization. . . . Mislabeling involves describing an event with language that is highly colored and emotionally loaded.

10. PERSONALIZATION: You see yourself as the cause of some negative external event which in fact you were not primarily responsible for.

*Adapted from *Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy* by David D. Burns, M.D., pp. 49-50. Copyright © 1980 by David D. Burns. Reprinted by permission of William Morrow and Company, Inc.

Chapter Five:

Thoughts on School Change



In the following interviews, three teachers, each at different points in their respective careers, were asked to reflect on their lives as teachers. Many of the themes that emerge—a sense of isolation, the joy of watching students learn, the problem of stress, the need for collegiality, the difficulty of change—are not unique to these individuals. Their concerns and aspirations embody thoughts and feelings that most teachers experience. What the interviews reveal is the complexity of the teaching task and the willingness of these teachers to confront their lives in the classroom.

For the beginning teacher, the major concerns are survival—gaining familiarity with her students, establishing her identity as a teacher, assuring herself that she can help her students learn. Essentially, she sees herself as alone. Able to ask other teachers questions, she must nonetheless test herself as a teacher by herself. Feeling overwhelmed at first, she is by the time of the interview more confident and self-assured. She has succeeded during her first year and has, as she says, "learned a lot."

For the teacher at mid-career, the major concerns are questions about teaching as a profession and about self-renewal. He is experiencing concerns about the adequacy of his professional worth, questioning whether he should continue in teaching, looking for ways to maintain his enthusiasm and commitment. Throughout the interview he identifies a number of sources to blame for his discontent—most notably, students, other teachers, and administrators—yet he realizes that he, ultimately, is responsible for overcoming the hopelessness and fragmentation he has experienced. Like the beginning teacher, he feels isolated and cut off. The weekends offer a respite, "a mental health break," in his words. Yet he overcomes his feeling of alienation by assuming responsibility—he becomes involved in a school improvement project—and by joining his colleagues in working together for a common purpose.

The result is that he begins to feel better about himself and about his teaching. He compares how he feels now with how he felt when he began teaching and concludes that it is "a privilege to be working at this school."

For the teacher nearing the end of her career, the major themes are change and new learning. Part of the changes are personal, for she has returned to college to renew herself. Part of the changes are job-related, for the district in which she teaches is in the process of implementing a new mathematics curriculum. Thus, she is having to learn the new materials and adapt them to her students.

Like the beginning teacher, the veteran teacher is concerned with personal adequacy and her ability to learn the new materials. But she is also concerned about the impact of the materials on her students. She is experiencing dissonance about her abilities and about what the new materials and teaching strategies will do to her pupils. Having taught for a quarter of a century, she is being asked to forego the old, established ways of doing things—procedures she felt comfortable with—and enter into a whole new realm of learning styles and modalities. She is being asked to do what she describes as an "enormous amount of work" before she can feel confident that the new materials are actually helping students learn better. By the end of the year, she has confidence in the new methods, but her thoughts on the process of change are instructive because of her insights about the problematic nature of change.

An Interview With a First-Year Teacher

The teacher in this interview graduated from a small private college in 1984 with a degree in elementary education. She is now teaching in a small rural district in Ohio.

Well, you'll be concluding your first year pretty soon. How has this year been?

To be quite honest, the first day when I came in, I was overwhelmed. Because being in a new position—and I had never taught first grade before—with all those responsibilities, I was a little overwhelmed.

Did anybody here try to help you get over this feeling?

Oh, yes. Everyone was very helpful.

And how did they do that?

Well, basically by answering a lot of questions that I had. You know, I had a lot of questions as to why they are doing this, and what is it going to accomplish, and where are we going from here? A lot of questions like that. I worked closely with the teachers in my complex and with my principal, and they really helped me see what we are doing with it and where it's going. They helped me in a lot of ways so I can teach more effectively. I feel I have really developed myself this year in being able to teach.

"My teaching techniques have not been fully developed yet. I hope to learn much more throughout the years."

Was it easy to make the transition from being a student to being a teacher?

No, when I came in, here were all the kids. You know, dealing with first graders isn't easy. I was lost for awhile. That's how I felt. I was very overwhelmed and was really taken by the situation for quite some time—a couple of months—before I felt relaxed enough that I really understood what we were trying to accomplish. The classroom has such different kids; each is so unique. My teaching techniques have not been fully developed yet. I hope to learn much more throughout the years.

You are the only new teacher in the building this year. Would it have helped if there had been one or two other new teachers going through similar experiences?

I think it would have been a support, but you are in the classroom by yourself. I kind of felt like I really wanted this position. Therefore, it was my responsibility to be flexible and learn and go along with the change. Being a first-year teacher, you don't have much to say.

I just really think you kind of have to make it on your own, something like that. Because if you depend upon someone else too much for helping you, it doesn't work. I asked a lot of questions and depended on some of the older teachers to help me through it. But, personally, I would rather just do it by myself because I think I learn more that way. And I have, I have learned a lot.

What's your impression of the school? Do you enjoy teaching here?

Most of the teachers in this school don't have to be here until 8:15 a.m. or 8:30 a.m. But almost every day there are four or five cars in the parking lot waiting for the door to be unlocked. I think by getting here early and really wanting to prepare for these children is caring about them greatly, you know. They care what they are teaching them.

I just think that some people get into a rut. They're teaching the same thing day after day after day, and it's just like "who really gives a darn anymore." And they just go in there, it's very automatic, and whatever they get out of it, they get out of it. I got some of that in my high school, but I thought my teachers were fairly interested in stimulating me. Without putting down the district where I went, this district far surpasses anything I saw there.

"Anytime you're learning something that is new, different, maybe a little more difficult, it's very frustrating. But, in the long run, I really think that teaching children is what I was meant to do."

How is this district superior?

In terms of . . . I don't want to say excellence in education, but in terms of caring and really teaching for the child to get it—not just teaching to teach. Teaching for money, they're not.

Many of the teachers you work with have taught for many years. How do they maintain their enthusiasm? Their love of teaching?

I think that some people are just made for teaching, and what they really want to do is help someone learn. Other people go into the profession because they think it's easy to go into—well, that's easy, and I'll go into that. And go through for the money. But I can truthfully say that I don't think anybody in this building is just teaching to teach, to get paid.

How would you summarize this first year?

It has really been a learning experience for me. And I'm not going to be dishonest and say it hasn't been frustrating at times, because it has been. Anytime you're learning something that is new, different, maybe a little more difficult, it's very frustrating. But, in the long run, I really think that teaching children is what I was meant to do. I feel so good about teaching when I know the children are learning.

For instance, yesterday we were doing liters. I had a bunch of water in class that we were pouring in and out of containers. All the children got to experience this—pouring four cups into a liter. Into a square, a cylinder, a rectangle, and a cube. I was so excited when they were finished because they had so much fun, and every one of them learned so much. Because they had experienced it, they had done it, and it just kind of made me high the rest of the day. I was telling one of the teachers; I just feel so good about that. It makes you feel so much better about yourself. Personally, not even as a teacher, you say, "boy, wasn't that great."

An Interview With a Teacher at Mid-Career

A speech and journalism major who was in business for eight years before going back to school for his teaching certificate, the teacher in this interview has been teaching at the same urban high school for 16 years.

It must be interesting to teach in the same school as long as you have. Have you seen many changes?

Yes, I have. When I got into education, my first five years, I felt like I should be paying somebody for the privilege of coming here every day because I loved it so much. I got out of a business, after eight years in a business, to get into this racket, but it hasn't been so much fun, lately. I was beginning to feel that maybe I should go back into business, and maybe I should do something else. Well, a lot of other staff members were having those feelings, so we did identify the fact that things were pretty rough here. Morale was very low.

What happened?

Well, we had a change in administration, for one thing, which I thought was going to be very supportive. I was the speech and debate coach and had a very active program, taking kids all over Ohio, into Michigan, as far away as Wisconsin, for competition. We had some pretty fantastic students. We saw a change in the student body, change in attitudes among the students, not really gaining the support perhaps down in the central office that we had hoped to have. We didn't have the rules and regulations that most businesses have, and most schools, perhaps, have. And discipline in the school, not just students' discipline, discipline among staff members kind of went out the window; and then everybody kind of fell apart and went their own way, and departments were fragmented.

"The thing that bothered me, complaining went on, we did have workshops with inservice in it, but nothing came out of it. People would just meet and then forget about it. It was just bits and pieces."

I imagine it was hard to teach?

My perception of the school was that basically there's a lot of negativism in our school. There were teachers who were not very positive. They were not participating, and it just seemed there was a lot of complaining going on, yet no one would do anything about it. Yet we've got a good staff, you know. The thing is we have a good staff, and I saw a lot of potential, but yet I saw a lot of need for improvement, too.

How did you feel about your school and colleagues?

The thing that bothered me, complaining went on, we did have workshops with inservice in it, but nothing came out of it. People would just meet and then forget about it. It was just bits and pieces. Some people would complain that nothing was happening because there was never a plan to follow through. We would just agree to meet and talk about something, and it would drop. And there was an inconsistency within the staff. Some people did certain things, other people did things that were contrary, so it seemed not to be a total cooperative effort throughout the whole school. All this bothered me. I got tired of hearing people saying, "Well, if I were in charge, I would do this." There were an awful lot of good ideas, but nobody would play up on them. And what we've done is to draw these people into doing something.

Despite the problems, however, you didn't quit teaching. In fact, you became involved in turning the school around. How did that occur?

Well, the first thing I did, I started talking with my friends. You can only beat your head against that stone wall so many times before you give up. The fact was other teachers felt the same way. And then I figured, "Well, the gratifying part is, I guess it's not me." Okay? Because the first thing I question is, "What am I doing wrong?" So if it's not only me, and Don has it, and Sarah has it, then we're all in this together.

"We decided we could make a difference, that no matter how bad things seemed, we could turn things around. We took some initiative."

We used to walk out at the end of the week and figure, "Why?" You know, why bother with it? I'm gonna tell you something. We've gotten to the end of these years where some of us are running to our cars and getting in those cars and trying to beat the kids out of the building and get away from here. We needed that mental health break for the summer, and some of us didn't even want to come back here in the fall.

So you begin to talk with your friends and colleagues. You saw that they were not feeling good. There was low morale. What did you decide to do?

We decided we could make a difference, that no matter how bad things seemed, we could turn things around. We took some initiative.

We started with five people. We asked for volunteers to help form a committee to help us plan how to improve the school, and then we brainstormed ways that might get the other teachers involved because, right off the bat, we wanted to get everyone involved so that the changes would be more meaningful. We all started looking at what we could do to improve. And the most interesting thing that I felt came out of it, at least for me, was the fact I was sitting across the table from a chemistry teacher that I say hello to in the halls, but I never see, never really talk to, and a shop teacher. All of these people from all of these different disciplines. And I learned, "By golly, these people have some terrific ideas." I learned so much from some of these people.

It just snowballed. I mean, one thing led into another, and it was so interesting—just sitting here in this group. When you get a group of people together, I mean, they just have so many interesting ideas. That's what totally amazes me. As a group, throughout the year, what we've come up with . . . just because we have got different ideas and everybody's got good input. It's just fantastic.

You organized committees to assess the school's needs, and you began to share ideas. What was the result?

In the past, many teachers had no way of knowing if another teacher had a similar type of problem. So now we can identify as a group, what's happening with that student as he goes from class to class to class and then we can pick up on something. Maybe in one class he's doing very well because of the method of teaching that was involved.

This will probably be the first time I know, in our department, that we're going to be sitting down as a department and discussing what we do in our classrooms, because we don't do enough of that sharing. As one of the teachers said earlier this week, "The greatest resource is within this building—what we do as teachers." We don't sit down and share it; we don't communicate. So this will be a good way to do that, sharing our skills.

I think the other positive thing is that there have been some visible improvements—things that are not just attending a meeting. When you came in, the roof was being repaired, and things that they asked for in that nature. Physical things that you can always come back and say, "We accomplished this, this, and this." Some of the more nebulous things—you know, whether your staff is more enthusiastic or whether they've picked up certain teaching skills—are hard to determine. But I think that there's been enough physical kinds of things that teachers can look at. They see the improvements.

"The idea of ongoing improvement is important. I think all the teachers and administrators and other personnel are going to be enthused, because everybody's going to be included—it's not going to be a core group. It's going to be everybody who works within this building, and that's a very positive approach."

What are some of the other results?

I think that we have come to the point everybody has been expecting for so long; I do think there is a lot of enthusiasm. People see things are going to be done, and I think our group has tried very, very hard to be enthusiastic. Our negativism through the years had just been getting greater and greater. Again, the physical things, I think, make a difference. If you talk to people and you say, "Well, we got this done," or "We're going to do this," they're skeptical at first. But I think if they find out that we are going to implement many of the ideas that we've tossed around, we're going to get more and more people really involved.

The idea of ongoing improvement is important. I think all the teachers and administrators and other personnel are going to be enthused, because everybody's going to be included—it's not going to be a core group. It's going to be everybody who works within this building, and that's a very positive approach.

I hope I'm not giving the impression that everything we did was strictly cosmetic. I mean, there have been classroom changes, changes with the students. The academic aspect has changed. We're getting more serious about focusing on the students and being teachers of a group again.

It's interesting the results your initiative has had. Instead of leaving teaching, you decided to take steps to change the school. How do you feel now? How have the changes affected you personally?

I went into teaching because I wanted to work with kids. I really wanted to teach. I'm feeling now the way I felt when I began teaching. It's a privilege to be working at this school. It's really great. At the end of the day now, I'm exhausted. But I feel I'm making a difference. I think the kids feel it, too. I'm feeling really good.

An Interview With a Teacher Who Has Taught for 26 Years

The teacher in this interview received her training at a large state university in the late fifties. She has taught off and on in three school districts during her career and is now working in a suburban elementary school.

You've been involved over the past two years in a major change that has involved incorporating learning styles into the curriculum. As an experienced teacher, how have the changes affected you?

Well it's interesting. When I first started teaching, and you have to remember that this has been 25 years ago, my training at that time was very similar to what we're doing now. Surprising to me when I came back into teaching was that some of that teaching seemed to have been abandoned in the meantime.

"Whenever you are going to make a change, especially when you're going to do something with children's lives, you feel hesitant, you feel uncertain about changing something that seems to have worked fairly well."

My teacher education courses and my beginning teaching experience were always designed so that you got on top of the material by teaching it through acting things out and using rods and sticks and counters and so forth. And as I said, I was kind of surprised when I came back into teaching this time, which has now been about seven years, to find that there was really less of that type of teaching being done. People were more paper-and-pencil oriented than they had been a number of years ago. So I can't say what happened in the meantime because I wasn't here.

How about your colleagues? Was it hard for them to implement the changes?

It's always hard to change suddenly. Yes. Whenever you are going to make a change, especially when you're going to do something with children's lives, you feel hesitant, you feel uncertain about changing something that seems to have worked fairly well. Our children did not score as high on the math parts of their standardized tests as they did on the reading parts. This always seems strange to us because they were the same children and the same teachers. It was hard to figure out why the same kids didn't learn math as well, why the same teachers didn't teach math as well as they apparently taught reading. And so you don't really want to make those changes unless you're reasonably sure that you are on the right track, because you don't want to mess the kids up. You don't want to do something that's going to confuse them.

Change is always difficult. What was the major concern among your colleagues?

There was a lot of concern about whether we were doing the right thing, whether we had enough theoretical background, whether we had enough training ourselves. Most of us in primary grades felt that we were word people more than number people anyway. And I think that you would often find this pattern among primary teachers. I know I felt this way, too. I'm basically not a mathematician, and I really doubted that I understood the whole body of mathematics well enough to say for sure what I could do with it on my own. I feel that I understand language better than I understand mathematics, and that I have more imagination and more creativity and just a better feel for it than I have for math. I was very timid about trying to devise my own curriculum or apply my own ideas in math because I really didn't have the confidence.

I will have to say that people in this building have always searched very hard for what they consider the best ways to do things. And people typically spend hours and hours of their own time making learning centers and looking for new ideas and going to workshops and things like that. So just trying something new was not a big thing here. But trying something new that people were unsure of was a big thing.

Your concern was the impact on your students. Do they seem to benefit from this new approach?

I think, as the year has gone along, that I have felt better about what we've been doing, because I've been able to create a new synthesis of what I was

"All of us have been in this together, going forward together. It's different from a typical inservice program."

doing between the old and the new. At the beginning of this year, we were presented with what seemed a revolutionary approach to math. Although we had been working on it all along, we still were not prepared for having to implement it on the short notice that we did have to implement it. Two days before school started, we were handed a thick packet of material, and we were told that we would now teach math this way for the next nine weeks. Well, there just wasn't time to look it over. In terms of all the other things that had to be done at the beginning of school—where is everybody going to sit . . . getting the books and workbooks and all the things you need for them—I had no time to really sit down and plan how I was going to integrate this with my previous knowledge.

As the year has gone along, we've had more time to work on it, and I think we've been able to do a better job of integrating it into our previous experience and the children's previous experience and to form a new synthesis of it. But at the beginning, it was very rough.

What did you feel during this period?

Anxiety. Again going back to what I just said, you don't want to subject children to something that you're not sure of yourself. You don't feel confident in front of them for one thing. But, then, you know on a deeper level . . . why, you're really concerned about what they are going to get out of what you're doing.

Now you've synthesized the materials and feel more comfortable with them. Are the children participating more?

I feel the children have become more active learners in math, and I'm real pleased with that. I'm getting a good bit of enthusiasm from my children. I have overheard children talking and I'm hearing—"I really like math"—and so I really do think that they have benefited from our training.

What have you enjoyed most about this experience?

Well, aside from the students' enthusiasm and their being more active, I like the way we're beginning to work together at the school.

I feel this staff development project was undertaken with the idea of really making some substantive changes. All of us have been in this together, going forward together. It's different from a typical inservice program.

For example, when you go to a workshop or something in the summer and no one else is there from your school, and you think, boy, when I get back wouldn't it be wonderful if all the people I teach with were here so that we could all be doing the same thing? We all would have the understanding, and we would all be teaching reading or whatever, and all have a common point of view.

"We were yelling at our children and husbands, and our personal lives were falling apart. We were coming into our classrooms tired and not being able to teach and just worn out from the planning and record keeping and observations and so forth that we were being asked to do. And, as I said, we really were falling apart."

But it's so difficult to go back and share these things with everyone that you eventually don't get it done. You do things your way, and they do things their way, and you share a few things and they share some things with you. But again, knowing that we were all going to go through this together, we were optimistic about it at the beginning. Some things have not worked out as well as we had hoped they would.

What advice would you give to people who were trying to do a similar type of training at their building?

I have to tell you that I'm taking a course in graduate school. Last night was the final. The course was on educational change, so I've given this a lot of thought. Although the teachers were involved in many steps of the process up to the beginning of this year, when we got going with things this year, it was too big a project not to come back and ask us how things were going and not to be honestly open to the possibility that things were not going well. When we got into it this year, it was as if all the other input had just been preliminary. Then decisions were made over the summer that we had to implement, and nobody wanted to hear from us again. No one.

Now, we did call our consultant down, and we have talked with him about difficulties we were having in doing the material and doing the project. We were having difficulty just simply getting the work load done. We were working 60 hours a week and were not being able to keep up with what needed to

"People should not be dismissed as not wanting to do a project because they are having problems with it."

be done. We were yelling at our children and husbands, and our personal lives were falling apart. We were coming into our classrooms tired and not being able to teach and just worn out from the planning and record keeping and observations and so forth that we were being asked to do. And, as I said, we really were falling apart. Our consultant was very receptive, and he was helpful to us. I'm not criticizing him, but it took us a long time to get up our courage to even approach him about it—to quit trying to work it out ourselves and to realize that we had to ask for outside help. We had to ask him what things we might be doing in our normal routine that we could dispense with in order to work on this. Because we could no longer choose priorities. We didn't know what to drop in favor of doing this.

The project required a lot of extra time?

We were getting too tired even to think about it anymore. That phase is over, and, as I said, he was very receptive and helpful. He came and listened to us and gave us suggestions. I'm not saying it to be critical of him, but there was a point where it became very difficult for us to communicate to the administration or to the consultants what problems we were having. It seemed as if, and I'm being very frank here, our perception was, and I'm not saying it's true, but our perception was that we were perceived as being just unwilling to change if we had any problems with it. Now I'm not sure where this perception came from, why we had it, but it was more a perception that if we complained or said, "Hey, this isn't working very well," people were just going to say, "Hey, you guys just don't want to change, you're lazy," or whatever. People should not be dismissed as not wanting to do a project because they are having problems with it.

This is a huge undertaking, and you can't undertake a project of this magnitude without having good communication between the people who are leading it and the people who are doing it.

What are some of the other barriers to change?

Well, intertia. People like to keep on doing things the way they've been doing them. Not understanding the need for change, not understanding the nature of the change that's proposed, fear of obsolescence, fear of having work groups disrupted, fear of not knowing how to do it.

How can these fears be overcome or alleviated?

Outside change agents have to be more careful—or have sometimes a more difficult role—than internal change agents would have. They have to establish their credibility, their reliability, their concern for people, and that sort of thing. But anyone has to be aware of people's feelings about what's going on. They have to establish a rationale for change, and everyone has to buy into it.

"I think sometimes we need to listen to teachers more and hear—not just hear but understand—what they are saying."

I think in this particular case that rationale was not firmly established beforehand. People had too many doubts about where it was going before it went on. They were asked to do something about it. I think understanding the reason or the need for a change was fairly well done, but really accepting it as our own idea—somehow we lost that along the way. I think people have to be shown ways of getting from where they are to where they intend to go. That takes time and communication. I think sometimes we need to listen to teachers more and hear—not just hear but understand—what they are saying.

Have you learned a lot through this experience?

Yes. I've had to rethink my teaching. It's been good for me. Especially at this point in my career when I'm back in graduate school taking classes and reexamining my style of teaching.

As you look back on your career, do you see many changes in how schools are run?

I don't think so. I see very caring teachers, and I'm not really talking about myself; I'm only talking about the people I teach with. I see very careful attention to children's progress. When I first came here to teach, it was in the old building that was here; it's been torn down now. And it was typical for teachers to go to the teachers' lounge every time they had a break and smoke a cigarette and drink a cup of coffee and tell jokes and never discuss school or classes until they had to go back or the bell rang. That's not true here now. Teachers in the teachers' lounge—most of them—are discussing children. "Did you have this child last year? What was he like? Did something work with him, what did you find out about him?" Really the conversation is concerned with children.

I also think the attitude of the child and the teacher has improved a lot. It goes back to this caring situation. It's not only what's in that book or on that test; it's me as a person. I think the attitude between parents and teachers has definitely improved. All of a sudden, it's "What is my child learning?"—not "How come he got a *D*?" or "How come he got an *F*?" And that's life. There are going to be some *D*'s in the world and there are going to be some *F*'s. But if you're more interested in what that child is learning, it makes for a happier home life for the child.

One final question. I've watched you conduct your class and you make it look easy. What's your secret?

Well, in order to make it look easy, you have to do an enormous amount of outside work. You have to be really prepared. You have to have your thoughts in order, you have to have the materials ready, and then it looks easy. If you don't prepare, then it's probably going to look like a hard job because you haven't put the work into it in the first place.

Reflection H
Responses to Changes in a School

Increasingly, teachers are involved in school improvement efforts. The three teachers interviewed in this chapter responded to change in various ways. Their concerns and feelings lend insight into other types of school change. Consider the following questions:

1. What are the similarities of concern among the three teachers?

2. How do their concerns differ?

3. What feelings are expressed by all three teachers?

4. What strategies would help dispel negative impressions for each teacher?

5. What implications do these teachers' views have for other staff development programs?

Chapter Six:

Some Learning About Teaching: A Summary

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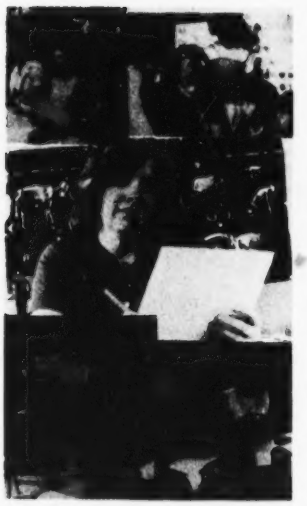


What have we learned about teachers and teaching? Based upon the research literature and the interviews, several conclusions are warranted.

Teachers stand at the center of learning. Their influence upon students is immense. Teaching is an awesome responsibility that directly affects students in myriad ways. Teachers are educational leaders who, like top professionals in any field, are concerned with developing and refining their skills. Such teachers, the popular media notwithstanding, are concerned each day with doing the best job they can, striving in spite of conditions that may encourage mediocrity or discouragement. Such teachers strive to excel. They acknowledge their professional responsibility to their schools and to their students.

Teaching, above all, is an interpersonal activity that does not follow an easy formula or recipe. Teachers, like their students, grow and learn from their mistakes. They are willing to reflect at day's end on which activities worked and which did not, on which students they were successful with, and on which students they failed to reach. They are willing, in short, to confront themselves and to examine their practices closely so that successes are encouraged and failures lessened. Such confrontations with the self, made with the willingness to acknowledge mistakes, are never easy.

Artistic Teachers

Like an artist, the teacher must strive in each class, and for every student, to present a fresh, innovative experience. Students know when the teacher is doing the lesson by rote. Thus, great teachers must try to help the students experience the material with the teacher as if for the first time. The ability to bring vitality and creativity as one teaches material repeatedly is the mark of a gifted teacher—a teacher who can embrace the teaching act wholeheartedly.

To attain those moments of joy when learning occurs on a systematic basis requires extensive preparation and training. Nearly anyone can teach a lesson effectively once. But only gifted teachers can ensure that learning occurs for a variety of students again and again. Before teachers can achieve artistic mastery, they must learn the rudiments of teaching. Just as the artist in music or art or literature must know the elements of the discipline, the types of media and their effects, and the techniques of the craft, so also the teacher must be knowledgeable about the discipline of teaching and about the methods and materials available, and then be able to approach each student with suitable learning experiences that encourage the student to learn. Each of these aspects of teaching implies that the teacher has mastered the fundamentals. Such understanding requires time; only then can the artistry of teaching occur.

These teachers have the same characteristics that identify all creative people. They possess, first of all, what Rollo May (1975) calls "creative courage." This type of courage is especially vital in "the discovering of new forms, new symbols, new patterns on which a new society can be built" (p. 21).

Perhaps the distinguishing characteristic of artistic teachers is their fundamental belief that they can make a difference in the lives of students. These teachers have a sense of efficacy. In addition to loving their subject matter and believing it important, they convey their enthusiasm about learning to their students. They maintain that learning and teaching are vital, and that all students can learn if given appropriate opportunities and encouragement. As Joseph Epstein (1981) notes, "What all the great teachers appear to have in common is love of their subject, an obvious satisfaction in arousing this love in their students, and an ability to convince them that what they are being taught is deadly serious" (p. xii).

Such teachers are indeed the artists of the profession, whom students never forget. They are unforgettable because they have the courage to act on their commitments to students. They transmit their passion to their colleagues and their students by their enthusiasm and their love of learning. Committed to greatness each time they enter their classroom, they are willing to invest the time and practice necessary to ensure that they can make a difference in the lives of those they teach. Artistic teachers demonstrate what Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus (1985)—echoing James MacGregor Burns—have called "transformative leadership": They create visions for their students of what might be, helping students to be the best they can by empowering them with knowledge and skills (pp. 224-225). (Reflection I outlines other leadership qualities.)

School Culture

An organization's norms and values affect the people who work in it. A school with a strong sense of purpose—where students and teachers share common goals and attitudes about learning—promotes, explicitly and implicitly, the importance of learning. Organizations, whether schools or businesses, can encourage or discourage, depending on the ideals and values that are espoused. Among the 12 characteristics of good schools identified by Jack Frymier and his associates (1984), there was a feeling on the part of faculty and staff that their work was "challenging and satisfying"; and there was a commitment on the part of the faculty to seek "continuing renewal and improvement" (Frymier and others, 1984, p. 221). Such schools create an environment that enhances personal and professional growth.

It is such hopes and visions of excellence that provide direction and a sense of possibility. Without these hopes and the belief that improvement is possible, there is little point in trying. Schools need to create among faculty and students a culture of excellence that unifies the school through visions of what might be achieved through increased learning and fine teaching.

Personal Change

Sometimes the conditions of change stem from external forces—a new promotion, a business opportunity, a fellowship—and sometimes the changes come from internal discoveries: I want to be in better shape physically, or I want to be a better parent, or I do need to learn computer skills. In either case, whether the stimulus is external or internal, one of the first responses is to deny the need for change. Through denial, individuals refuse to acknowledge the opportunity for growth. Instead, they close their eyes to the opportunity or refuse to face the need for change. Usually people will not risk change until there is a clear need or until the lack of change creates too much unhappiness for the individual. Sometimes it is easier to change than to not change. More likely, however, perceiving the need for change does not occur rapidly or overnight. Change, and the recognition of it, is incremental and piecemeal. Realization of the need for change dawns slowly on the individual.

It is when *Taking New Action* that educators' actions begin to have consequences for others. By this time in the change process, learners have incorporated the new skills into their personal styles. For a principal, this may mean a better ability to work with the staff. For a teacher, this may mean a greater ability to individualize instruction or to be more proficient in leading group work. Because they have learned to be more effective, they are better able to help others learn. "A leader who can take personal responsibility for both old and new assumptions, is thereby enabled to reach out to other people by attempting to imagine their assumptions, and to structure interactions in ways that move toward mutual exchanges" (Jentz and Wofford, p. 9).

Change is never easy, never fast. Most change occurs slowly as new learning is practiced and refined. Because change is incremental and takes time, it is important that individuals have the opportunity to practice their new learning and receive constructive criticism about how their new skills are progressing. Above all, if change is to be accomplished, people need the opportunities to take risks. Invariably, people will make mistakes, because they are experimenting with new behaviors. An environment that encourages taking risks and making mistakes inspires people to experiment with their personal growth. Innovative companies are establishing such environments.

Climates of Excellence

Best companies and best schools share a common orientation. They have broad, general goals that are well-understood by people who work in the organization; at the same time they help people define how they, as individuals, will contribute to these goals. Within a climate or culture that actuates excellence, people take personal responsibility for accomplishing tasks. Whether they are engaged in managing or teaching, individuals believe their actions have important consequences for success. Because they believe they have personal control over their destinies, productive people exhibit commitment and ownership. Equally important as controlling one's destiny is the feeling that one is part of something larger—one's work is linked to larger organizational concerns. Both the individual as a person and the individual as part of a larger team effort are important.

Schools or corporations that acknowledge the importance of growth and provide opportunities for employees to participate will elicit higher performance. A culture that promotes growth among adults will, in turn, encourage new learning among students.

Growth in Teaching

What have we learned about teachers' personal growth? Excellent teachers are dynamic. They change and grow throughout their careers, and their interests and concerns in the classroom change as they mature. These concerns are related to how they see themselves at particular stages in their careers (Yarger and Mertens, 1980). Personal needs and professional needs change as adults mature (Knowles, 1978). Different types of learning activities, self-directed and job-related, can stimulate involvement.

Those teachers who survived the first year and continued in teaching saw themselves as increasingly gaining mastery the longer they stayed in teaching. As their confidence grew and their skills improved, these teachers saw themselves as more finely skilled practitioners. Most of the teachers, because they remembered their turmoil during their first year, said that they tried to go out of their way to talk with and support first-year teachers.

The process of becoming a master teacher requires a long-term commitment. The teachers indicated periods ranging from 3 to 12 years before they considered themselves fully capable teachers. Each of them agreed that they continued to learn more about being effective each year that they taught.

What lies ahead for teachers who have achieved mastery at mid-career? How do they continue to grow? Career ladders, which enable teachers to assume more complex responsibilities as their careers advance, may provide one method for promoting personal and professional growth. Many of the recent national reports on teaching recommend that career paths or career ladders be started so that teachers have the opportunity to advance in their profession. Whether the method is career ladders or some other type of teacher incentive, there is a need for career enhancement in teaching. Opportunities for growth are essential. The changes in responsibilities, such as mentoring younger, less experienced teachers, could be linked to different economic compensations as teachers receive promotions. Such promotions, according to the reports, should be based on performance evaluations that use peer review and assessment (Schlechty and others, 1985).

Artistic teachers realize that personal and professional growth are cojoined. To be a master teacher requires, minimally, that one is professionally current—aware of the research and theory about effective teaching—and personally growing. Teachers who feel good about themselves and their profession, who have a feeling of efficacy and a sense that they are making a difference in the lives of students, are far more likely to be successful in their classrooms. This sense of personal and professional growth implies self-awareness and cognizance about the types of responses one makes in the classroom. The greater the amount of self-knowledge, the more choices one brings to teaching.

The essence of teaching is a commitment to students' achievement. In a discussion with a group of talented teachers, four recurrent themes embodied what these teachers saw as quality teaching. These themes involve personal and professional *responsibility;* organizational and collegial *support;* more *time;* and, finally, greater *continuity* in professional growth and learning activities.

Growth is a process; not an event. The growth of an artistic teacher is ongoing: the talent and skill are continuously being refined and enhanced. According to Eliot Wigginton, editor of the Foxfire series and a teacher for 20 years, the best teachers are always engaged in professional growth: "The best teachers I know are always actively involved in the process of becoming better teachers" (p. 275).

Because quality teachers are always concerned about becoming more skilled, they welcome evaluation as a part of their ongoing professional assessment. Evaluation, as a process designed to make decisions about personal and professional learning, is acknowledged by these teachers as a key component of their teaching careers. Just as students are regularly evaluated, so too, say these teachers, should teaching be tested and examined.

Teachers who can learn from their mistakes are more likely to be satisfied with their careers. Good teachers, in addition to being willing to take risks, constantly adapt new theories or models. They work on improving their repertoire of teaching strategies.

Teachers vary in their readiness for change. Even when engaged in implementing a new curriculum or text, teachers tend to be at various stages of readiness. They experience different needs, have personal concerns about self-adequacy, and wonder about how the changes will influence students.

Teachers learn because they want to be excellent. They know, as Kenneth Eble points out in *The Craft of Teaching* (1976), that "Learning and teaching are constantly interchanging activities. One learns by teaching; one cannot teach except by constantly learning" (p. 8). Pride in being excellent impels artistic teachers. That commitment to excellence is one of the reasons such teachers are artists.

Reflection I
A Checklist of Leadership Strategies

In *Leaders* (1985), Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus state that leaders have four strategies for effective leadership. They define leadership as the quality that "gives an organization its vision and its ability to translate that vision into reality" (p. 20).

You may wish to assess your own leadership qualities based on the four strategies, or skills, that leaders embody:*

_____ Strategy I: Attention through vision

Leaders help others focus on a compelling vision of what will be achieved.

_____ Strategy II: Meaning through communication

Leaders create a strong image of desired outcomes and communicate this image in ways that induce enthusiasm and commitment in others.

_____ Strategy III: Trust through positioning

Leaders personify clarity, constancy, and reliability: they create trust and integrity.

_____ Strategy IV: The deployment of self through (1) positive self-regard and (2) the Wallenda factor

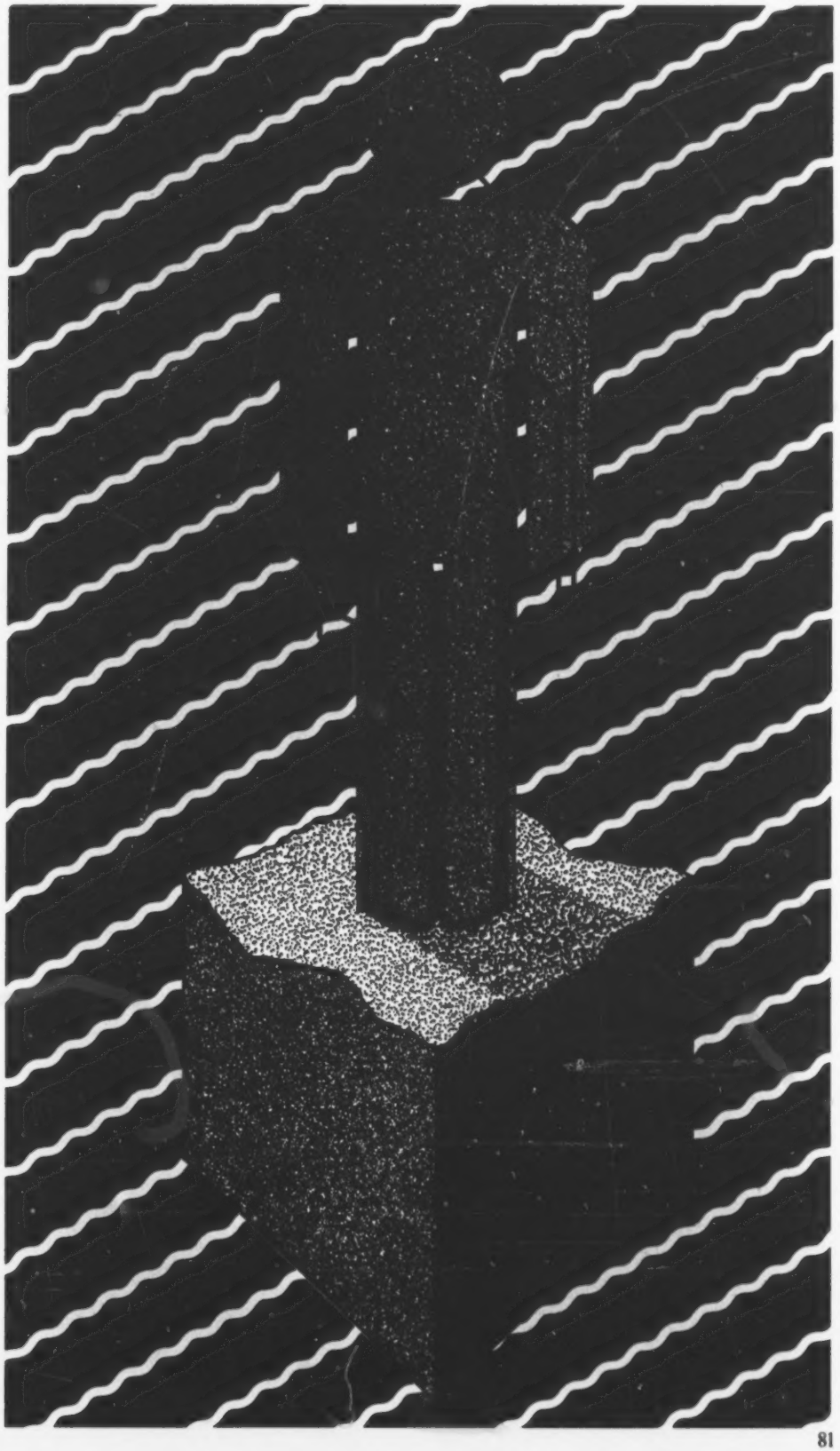
First, leaders have knowledge of their strengths and of how to increase them; they are proud of the work they do; and they can engender positive self-regard in others.

Second, leaders do not think about failure; when they do fail, they see that as a learning experience and go on.

*Adapted from *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge* by Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, pp. 20-27; 33; 44-46; 61-62; 69-70. Copyright © 1985 by Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

Chapter Seven:

Four Scenes from the Future



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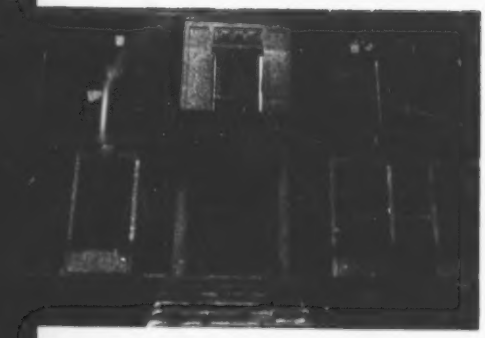
Since 1983, when *A Nation At Risk* was published, there have been over 25 reports on education. Perhaps the most significant aspect of these reports is that they have focused attention on the importance of public education and the training of teachers—both preservice education and their subsequent career growth through staff development. What the future of schools and teaching will be is yet to be decided. Recommendations from the reports, discussions among professional educators, and advice from the general public and from parents and other interested groups will shape the future of education.

Some reports are negative; some positive. But it is clear that public education is in a process of redefinition and renewal. Each of the reports contains different visions of the future—variations of themes—that need to be considered before informed decisions can be made. Educational policy today shapes what education will be tomorrow. Different reports offer different choices.

The future of schools is a self-fulfilling prophesy. We as educators can become what we want to be. The visions we hold of excellence determine to a large extent how we envision possibilities—what we will become. The following scenes might be viewed as parables, or perhaps as roadmaps, of a future not so far away: What will schools be like? How will teaching then differ from teaching today? How will teachers feel about their profession and themselves?

1. Sidelines



The hardest thing was the mornings, especially fall mornings like today. The rain hadn't stopped. The night job was getting worse. Thomas Weller hated selling, and the commissions were lousy. He hoped the job as an usher would be better. At least, it won't be commission and draw.

Tom had hoped that when the maximum became four classes it would help, but there were still too many kids. Twenty students were too much. There was no way to keep up with the paperwork. Too little time for individual attention, even with the computer-scored diagnostics. The kids needed more coaching as they revised their publications.

One thing he could never understand was the incredible absenteeism. All the absences made it nearly impossible to follow up with kids on assignments. They were never there. You never knew who you'd have in class. Sometimes they were so infrequently there that he couldn't ever remember their faces.

With the virtual elimination of television because of a national lack of interest, kids had a lot of time on their hands. Keeping all cultural institutions open 23 hours a day helped. Those new national schools were making a difference. But local schools were nearly dead. Too much competition. All that private initiative. Even at Tom's school, one of the best in the region, there were a lot of layoffs. Unemployement was too high. Getting a teaching job without at least two Ph.D.'s was rough. Too many skilled people. Thank God there were still teaching jobs in the continuing education sector. He wasn't sure, though, if the whole emphasis on lifelong learning was hurting the public schools. There was so much awareness, and there were so many choices.

At lunch he was assigned to the west quad, where he saw Phyllis. She was leaving teaching to be with the National Corps. Good consulting position, he had heard. He couldn't see doing it, though. Too much competition, too many ranks and hurdles to jump. He had too many years in. At least he was left alone. As long as kids weren't throwing people out the window, they left him alone.

He tried to sleep during prep period, but there was too much noise. Just as he dozed off his wristwatch rang. It was time for his last class. He lived in trepidation of this class. In 22 years he'd never seen its equal. And that was really saying something. They were just passed on from grade to grade. A real scandal, but no one wanted to notice. Education at the school where Tom taught was an ignored secret. Everyone looked the other way.

He made some calls at 3:30, as soon as school got out. Nobody home. He'd have to try again after supper. Then he changed clothes and walked into the amphitheater where the juniors practiced. The second teams had already started. Tom used to like to coach. But he was getting tired. Too many after-school perks—they paid good money, but took up too much time. It was hard to keep up with his second job.

The evening went smoothly. With the right people, those big encyclopedias really sold. The problem, however, was that by now nearly everyone had a set, and a lot of people still depended heavily on the last edition. That one hundred nineteenth was really strong on historical description. Still, once in a while, you'd get lucky.

It had been a good night, but he was tired. He had a commitment to the choir in the morning, then the game in the afternoon. It would be another long day.

He had a hard time falling asleep. It was a long time until retirement, and he saw little hope of change. After all the years he had invested in education, he expected more. He was inherently optimistic about teaching. But he had never received support. The daily grind was getting to him. Finally, he fell asleep, dreaming of his last vacation.

2. Goal Lines

There wasn't much else to say. Linda Miller was getting out. She could make more money as a waitress. They made it in tips. She wouldn't have the harassment. A lot of her friends had left. And they didn't complain about quitting. Every one of them was making more than they had in teaching. Working conditions almost anywhere were better. This winter was especially bad because the school was so poorly heated.

But she would miss the kids. It was fun working with the little ones. They learned so fast. The consultants who brought in the new curriculum really had the products. The materials taught themselves. Well, they were guaranteed to be "teacherproof, foolproof, money-back guarantee." She wished teaching were that simple.

The utter contempt people directed at teachers. It was very discouraging. Everyone wants respect and appreciation. But it was nothing new. Teachers were never appreciated. Look what they did to Socrates. Now the hemlock works more slowly: you die alone in your class day by dav. The alienation and loneliness—she didn't know which was worse—were terrible. Linda barely saw her colleagues except sometimes after work, when they'd stop for a drink. Who needed the isolation?

The only challenge of her job was keeping her credential current. The paperwork and the ever-changing deadlines. When credentials expired was published daily. But it was hard to keep up with. It wouldn't matter now. She was going to take the written section of the waitress exams at noon. And as soon as she got the results, she was handing in her notice. If she did as well on the writtens as she did on the oral and performance sections, she would test out at a Level III. That meant automatically more dollars than she got as a fourth-grade teacher. Best of all, she wouldn't be grading all the homework.

At 25, Linda felt she was at a crossroads in her life. She needed a change of careers—and a much bigger nest egg—before she'd consider having a family. The intersections of her life seemed askew, disjointed. Fragments. A mosaic unjoined. Well, with her education and skills, she had a lot of possibilities. She could retrain while she made money as a waitress. Still, she was going to miss those kids.

She left school quickly at 4:00 and headed for the university. Law was starting to feel good to her. She was developing conceptual schema of how the pieces fit together. As she developed her understanding, the various cases found niches in her self-confidence. It would be a long haul, but worth it. Lawyers, even at the bottom, were respected and well paid. Even their professional education courses were completely subsidized. The challenge was getting in, passing the bar exam.

Linda was tired when she got home that evening. The class had been excellent, but she felt tired. And tomorrow, with her car acting up, she'd have to get up earlier than ever. The afternoon would be devoted to competitions. She had to be alert for that.

She fell quickly asleep and dreamed of passing the bar exam.

3. Deadlines

The day was gray and overcast as Eric Santee left for school at 10:00 a.m. He went immediately to his library carrel where he began to prepare notes and slides. He reminded himself to review the videotapes of the last meeting before he typed the agenda for his meeting with first-year teachers at seven that evening. He pulled the teachers' daily logs and placed them on his desk. He wanted to watch particularly the second-year teachers, the Colleague IIs, to see how the mentoring and coaching was going.

At 12:00 he finished his preparation and reviewed his notes for his 1:00 tutorial. Sometimes he had a hard time keeping up with these kids. He was reminded once again of how some of the youngest students excelled in the mixed-age clusters. They brought so much excitement to the older students. He put on a Charles Ives video and watched nineteenth century America parade across his monitor. He enjoyed these kinds of interdisciplinary tutorials because they required him to extend himself—the new ideas in the research moving faster than ever. Continuing education was the only way to keep current.

The combination of Ives' music with Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* and the videotaped mini-lecture by the world's foremost scholar of the Gilded Age would be a delight.

Immediately following the tutorial, he met with the student coaches from his 2:00 class to review the evaluation of the journals and essays. He found that this review was essential so that the coaches agreed on how to conduct their sections of the class. These new humanities classes were his pride and joy. Shakespeare was really turning the kids on.

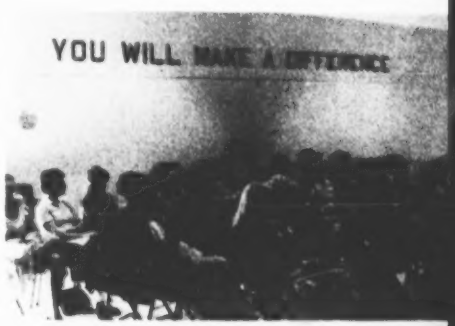
He introduced the actors, highlighted the five-part structure of the play, and noted critical scenes. For individual study, the students would rely on the guided questions that had accompanied the text. The Elizabethan language was bothering some of the younger pupils. Problems with vocabulary. They liked the iambic pentameter, though. He relaxed while he watched the play, noting again how students adore seeing their friends perform. Jamie got a big cheer.

By 5:30 when he was heading home, it began to rain. Good. The tulips needed it. Before dinner he read the paper and watched the news. Reading scores were up again. National literacy was hiking those scores. But he could remember when the cost of living was rising faster than test scores. He had been a real novice then. How embarrassing that was: to be a beginning teacher when teachers were held in such low esteem. Those were grim times. National failure of nerve. Lack of confidence.

The meeting that evening went well, in Eric's view, although the philosophical differences still were dividing Bruner's followers from the neoclassicists. The Pestalozzians were urging more fast-paced reforms. Eric thought these sessions helped make people examine their assumptions. Reflecting on behaviors forces assumptive change. It was clear when he left at 9:30 that it would be a late evening. There were fanatics in every profession. He cherished them.

He fell asleep wondering if Dewey wouldn't be pleased. The patron saints must be smiling. What a delight to be a teacher. The joy of learning that permeated the school where Eric taught was typical. School improvement efforts had paid off. Eric loved being a teacher. He enjoyed the artistry.

4. Your Lines



As an educational leader, what future for schools do you select? How will you help that future to be achieved? When will you begin?

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Suggested Readings

There are a wide variety of books on the topic of personal growth in teaching. What follows is a highly selective list of books that would be appropriate for follow-up readings.

Louis J. Rubin's *Artistry in Teaching* (Random House, 1985) provides an excellent overview of the concept of artistry in the first part of his book. The second part offers specific, hands-on techniques for enhancing artistry in the classroom. Rubin draws an analogy between that classroom and the theater, and he then offers various exercises that can be used in classes.

Ken Macrorie's *Twenty Teachers* (Oxford University Press, 1984) consists of extended interviews with 20 highly talented teachers who describe their lives and their work. The teachers interviewed range from a kindergarten instructor to a professor of graduate students. The book provides a wealth of information on the lives of teachers.

Two books that lend insight into the world of teaching and learning are Ann Lieberman and Lynne Miller's *Teachers, Their World, and Their Work: Implications for School Improvement* (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1984) and John H. Lounsbury and J. Howard Johnston's *How Fares the Ninth Grade? A Day in the Life of a 9th Grader* (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1985). Each book gives a unique perspective.

There are literally hundreds of self-help books on the market today. One of the most useful is *Feeling Good: The New Mood Therapy* (William Morrow, 1980). Written by David D. Burns, M.D., this book is based on clinical research about perceptions and mood change. Burns maintains that thoughts cause depression. He offers guidelines on how people can learn to change their perceptions and thus enhance their moods.

A similar thesis is developed by Robert L. Woolfolk and Frank C. Richardson in *Stress, Sanity, and Survival* (New American Library, 1978). The authors describe various activities, including self-hypnosis, auto suggestion, and meditation, as methods for coping with stress. They suggest ways to stop creating stress through changes in thought and behavior.

Another excellent self-help manual has been developed by Louis Tice. Called *Investment in Excellence: An Application Guide* (The Pacific Institute, 1983), this training material is designed to help people change their attitudes about themselves and their lives. Especially helpful in terms of change is Tice's discussion of self-talk—the messages, positive or negative, that people say to themselves.

A classic work on teachers' self-understandings was written over 30 years ago by Arthur T. Jersild. Based upon interviews and conversations with hundreds of teachers, *When Teachers Face Themselves* (Teachers College Press, 1955) identifies major themes such as anxiety and loneliness and then describes teachers' reactions to these themes.

An excellent autobiography by Eliot Wigginton, *Sometimes a Shining Moment: The Foxfire Experience* (Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1985), traces the growth and development of a gifted teacher. The book amply demonstrates Wigginton's learning process during his 20 years of high school teaching.

An interesting book designed to guide teachers in increasing their professional development is Robert M. W. Travers and Jacqueline Dillon's *The Making of a Teacher: A Plan for Professional Self-development* (Macmillan Publishing Co., 1975). In five relatively brief chapters, the authors offer an outline of teachers' roles and then provide exercises that help teachers become more proficient in the classroom.

A similar method is used by Richard L. Curwin and Barbara Schneider Fuhrmann in *Discovering Your Teaching Self: Humanistic Approaches to Effective Teaching* (Prentice-Hall, 1975). The book provides a plethora of activities for assessing and strengthening teacher behaviors. Self-directed learning activities are used throughout the book.

Finally, for insights about the impact of institutional cultures on individual and group performance, there are two fine studies. Terrence E. Deal and Allen A. Kennedy have written *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life* (Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1982). The book's ten chapters deal with the elements of an organizational culture—values, heroes, rites, and communications—and then offer methods for studying various cultures. James Lewis, Jr., has analyzed the recent research on excellence and organizational cultures, drawing upon the work of Deal and Kennedy and Peters and Waterman. He applies the implications of this research to educational change in *Achieving Excellence in Our Schools . . . by Taking Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies* (J.L. Wilkerson Publishing Company, 1986). The book describes how schools can increase professional and personal success for educators and their students by employing 12 lessons about organizational excellence.

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